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АН БЕР V



GOSPEL VISITANT.

BEING PRINCIPALLY

ORIGINAL TRACTS ON MORAL AND RELIGIOUS
SUBJECTS :

IN WHICH AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE
GOSPEL OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR
IS ATTEMPTED BY ARGUMENTS DRAWN FROM
SCRIPTURE AND REASON.

THE WHOLE DIRECTED TO THE PROMOTION OF PIETY AND
MORALITY.

BY THE GLOUCESTER CONFERENCE.

VOL. I.

Superintended by THOMAS JONES, *Gloucester, (Cape-Ann,*
HOSEA BALLOU, Portsmouth, (N.H.) ABNER KNEELAND, *Charles*
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Charlestown :

PRINTED BY WILLIAM S. & HENRY SPEAR.

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1812.

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TO AGENTS AND PATRONS.

Having completed the first volume of the *Gospel Visitant*, the Publishers embrace this opportunity to present their sincere respects and grateful acknowledgements to their many *Agents* and *Patrons*, who have much encouraged this work by giving them their assistance and liberal support.

The increasing number of *Subscribers* (notwithstanding the discontinuance of some) is in evidence that the work has hitherto met with public approbation. There are yet many things, which we conceive to be of great importance to the christian world, and especially to the humble believer in the doctrine of *universal grace*, which we wish to lay before the public, and which we conceive may be done as well, or better, in this way, than in any other. The encouragement hitherto given to this work, has equalled, if not exceeded, our most sanguine expectations ; and we hope, in addition to our other labors, still to be useful in this way. This publication, in many parts of the country, may supply, in some measure, the lack of preaching ; for perhaps it is as true now, comparatively, as it ever was, that, "the harvest is great, but *faithful* laborers are few." We hear of new societies, springing up in the faith, in various parts ; and it is presumed that there never was a greater call for preachers, who dare to face an unbelieving world and proclaim the unbounded grace of God to the *chief* of sinners, than at this time. We would therefore suggest to our many societies, and individuals in the faith, who are not blest with the privilege of hearing that gospel which hath been declared by a voice from heaven to be *good tidings of great joy unto all people* regularly preached among them, the propriety of meeting together on the first day of the week, at some convenient place, to read the holy scriptures, which are able to make every one wise unto salvation, to exercise such gifts as may be present, in singing, praying, exhortation, or expounding the word ; and, for the want of public gifts, to read the *Gospel Visitant*, and such other books as may tend to instruction and edification. Such meetings, with the blessing of God, may be rendered very useful, and perhaps be the means of bringing forward many promising youth to labor in the vineyard of the great HUSBANDMAN, whose *vine* is CHRIST, and the *branches*, ALL MANKIND.

THE

GOSPEL VISITANT.

Vol. I.

FOR JUNE, 1844.

No. 1.

INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting to our readers the first Number of this Periodical Work, the Publishers consider it a duty to offer to its generous Patrons in particular, and to all in general who may be disposed to give it a candid perusal, a concise account of the origin, and contemplated objects of such a publication.

A few months since, a few of the Brethren in the belief and Ministry of the Gospel of reconciliation, who are members of the "General Convention of the four New-England States and others," conceived, that in addition to the Annual Meeting of that body, some improvement might be gained by more frequent interviews, although the number should be but small. They accordingly met in Conference at Gloucester, Cape-Ann, in the month of January last. At that meeting, it was agreed, that a Conference of the Brethren in the Ministry, be holden Quarterly, at such places as may appear most proper and convenient. A standing Moderator and Clerk were chosen, either or both of whose places, in case of absence, is to be supplied by others, elected pro tem. The business of this conference, originally embraced conversation upon Moral and Religious subjects. In addition to this, the spirit of free enquiry suggested a plan, some useful effects of which, we hope may be realized. The various brethren of the conference have the liberty of proposing questions upon any moral or divine subject. These questions are committed to other members, to be by them, answered in writing. These productions are to be read at the succeeding meeting; and if they meet the approbation of the brethren assembled; are lodged with the Clerk.

These are the outlines of a plan, which has since been enlarged and improved. It has been concluded to publish by

subscription in Quarterly Numbers, the several questions proposed, as, before mentioned, with the answers which are given ; but this will not be done to the exclusion of other important matter, in different forms. And though what is contained in the "GOSPEL VISITANT," will be chiefly original, yet we shall occasionally insert extracts from those writers who have labored for the instruction and improvement of man. Where the milder virtues of Christianity, Candor, Charity and Benevolence distinguish the page of an author, we may safely quote his observations, and without hesitation follow where reason leads ; nor need we forbid our readers this gratification, because as to the circumstance of name or sect, such a writer "followeth not with us."

The objects contemplated, though not vast in number, are still, as is conceived, of the highest importance. The diffusion of light, the promotion of knowledge, the public recommendation and progress of virtue, piety and religion, are, acknowledgedly, matters of the first consideration. We may indeed be asked, "and who is sufficient for these things ?" We may hear our own incompetency suggested, in terms, which even vanity itself would not choose to deny ; but it is still true, that discussion is favorable to the objects which reason contemplates. Truth is the result of comparison ; and if there ever was a time when a comparison of systems and theories, all claiming to be measured by one standard, were necessary, the present is, unquestionably, such a period.

To us it appears evident, that nothing but the truth can reconcile the present divisions, which unhappily prevail in the Christian world ; and that a candid and fair investigation of received opinions, must gradually tend to the attainment of that object. It need not be urged, *that it is impossible that this brief Periodical publication should embrace any new truth.* The same observation will apply with equal propriety to the *Panoplist*, the *Christian Observer*, and the multitude of Magazines, devoted to the diffusion of moral and religious knowledge. These works abound in the present day. And though we shall not take upon us, to discuss their relative merits, nor argue their general utility nor inutility ; still there is one observation, which reason prompts us to make ; viz. we possess the privilege, in common with our fellow christians, of presenting to a candid public, our views of things, relating to the kingdom of God ; and in the exercise of this privilege, we contemplate some good effect. If the system we profess, be founded upon reason and revelation ; if it embraces the good and happiness of man, then let its principles be disseminated.

But if upon trial and comparison, it appears that no such advantages attach to the doctrine for which we contend, then let it be exposed in its own deformity; the world can lose nothing by its exposure.

In making these reflections, we must not be understood to carry the idea, that this Pamphlet is to form a complete system of the doctrine in which we believe; but we trust it will possess some advantages above a large treatise. In works of a periodical nature, a kind of familiarity in style is generally adopted, which is always beneficial. And where the reader has had an opportunity to consult larger volumes upon a system, the parts of which are afterwards exhibited in a separate view, and in detached and concise portions, it will greatly assist him in establishing in his own mind, the several relations of those parts to each other, and in a more minute classification of his ideas.

Whatever, in our apprehension, has a tendency to virtue, piety, and pure and undefiled religion, in a word, whatever may have an effect, to exhibit divine truth, as altogether lovely, shall from time to time, as we have needed assistance granted us, be faithfully represented in these pages. The body of the work will be devoted to essays and arguments, on those subjects, which we believe are of primary importance in the various walks of the christian life. A department will be allotted to poetry. We shall perhaps be sparing of anecdote, though occasionally it may gain a place. Ordinations, installations, and general accounts of public conventional proceedings, will occupy a part; and in addition, such obituary notice, as is usual, in similar publications. In this form, we submit our labors to the consideration of the candid, liberal and enlightened.



ANSWER TO THE QUESTION—WHAT PROFESSION OF FAITH, &c.

QUESTION.—What Profession of Faith, do the Scriptures teach us was set forth and required by Christ and his Apostles, the belief of which, constituted a believer in the faith of the Apostolic Churches?

In the discussion of the subjects embraced in this query, we shall study simplicity, and aim at instruction and improvement. It is necessary to premise that the views which have been taken of this question are as different as those upon any theological point. And the various contradictory theories which have

been raised, have rather contributed to the exercise of the spirit of hatred and wrath than to soften, curb and subdue the malevolent passions. Each mad sectarian, with apparently equal pretensions to truth, with his opponent, has cried out in the name of his blinded disciples, "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we." This language, abstracted from concomitant circumstances might be harmless; but unhappily a dire train of bitter consequences, are the result of such causes. Passion has been enlisted in the contest. Persecution has waved her red standard and rallied around her banner, frantic zeal, spiritual pride and uncharitableness. Strengthened by such potent allies, her warfare against the religion and disciples of Jesus, has been more successful than just. The Christian world has been divided into parties, each claiming a kind of infallibility, not so much from the author of the Christian religion, as under the name of the leader of the particular sect. By such means, man has been made the enemy of man. The simplest truth has been industriously clouded and concealed; and many who were ardently desirous to acknowledge and profess that "worthy name by which they are called" have been shut out from the common privileges of christians, because they could not conscientiously subscribe to such articles, as, being the traditions of men, make no part in the requirements of the Christian dispensation.

Though we cannot promise ourselves the full attainment of an object, at once so high, so important and so extensive, as the deliverance of the mind from the power of false and incongruous systems; yet we believe something may be done, which may not be altogether ineffectual. Comparison of opposite things is favorable to the discovery of truth. Our readers are assured that we aim at such an advantage. Our efforts may be feeble, but we are conscious that the exertions made, are honestly directed; and we rest in confidence upon the noble simplicity of the Gospel, and the active, enlightened reason of man, for the fruits and consequences of our labours.

In discussing the question proposed, we shall adopt the following method,

I. Set forth the Christian profession of faith, in one simple proposition, differently expressed in the New Testament.

II. Consider the evidences, on which this profession of faith will rest.

III. Exhibit the propriety and necessity of simplicity and unity, in the profession of the Christian faith.

1. The simple proposition, the belief of which constituted a believer, in the faith of the Apostolic Churches, is thus expressed

and Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God—John xx, 31. This proposition is stated differently in the New Testament, though it is conceived that the idea is the same. Simplicity, that characterizes the whole Gospel, shines conspicuously here; and this circumstance, added to the important truth it embraces, renders it worthy of a careful investigation.

We shall be excused for considering this point both negatively and positively. It appears strange at first sight, if modern systems be correct, that the articles established as objects of faith, had not been made more numerous and more complex; inasmuch as number and complexity have distinguished all modern theories.

It seems equally astonishing, if received opinions of men be well founded, that our Saviour and his Apostles never required of new converts at their connexion with the Christian church, an expression of their belief in the article of endless misery. It is the more surprizing, as the pretended followers of the Lamb make this an important point, to which their newly initiated brethren are bound to subscribe; and the rejection of which will prevent their admission into the church, or prove the cause of their excommunication, if already members. We can receive no light upon this subject only by a recurrence to the nature of the Christian dispensation. The Gospel was never designed as a system of abstruse, complex, mysterious theories. It was from these, in part, that evangelical truth was calculated to deliver the world. The Gospel is in fact a highway and a way, in which the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err. Again, we can conceive nothing more improper, than the requirement of a faith in condemnation, as synonymous with faith in Christ, when a primary assertion concerning Christ, is, that God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

The necessity of an acknowledgement, that Jesus was the Christ the Son of God, will appear from the following consideration, viz.—It was the great article which the Jewish Rabbis and all their adherents doubted; and it is easy to see, that if convinced of the truth of the above proposition, the mind was prepared to receive a knowledge of all truths, which grow out of it.

We are induced to regard this as a preparatory step, particularly with regard to the Jews; as that people had been taught by Moses and the Prophets to expect a Messiah; and when he appeared, they rejected him, from the supposition that he was an impostor, and rejecting him, they despised also his

works and doctrine. This would never have been, had they known who he was; in the sense asserted in the scriptural proposition quoted as above.

It is now time, that the reader be presented with some memorable instances in which an acknowledgement of the article of Christ's Sonship was required and made. The first remarkable account that we shall produce, is that of the Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch by Philip. This man was reading in in his chariot concerning Christ, at the time Philip entered into conversation with him. The passage which he read, was a prophecy of Isaiah, specially regarding Jesus of Nazareth; but such was the ignorance of the Eunuch, that he enquired of Philip; "of whom speaketh the Prophet this, of himself or of some other man?" Philip answers, by beginning at that scripture and preaching unto him Jesus. Doubtless the discourse exhibited evidence of the only article necessary for an admission into fellowship with the Apostles, which directly followed: For coming to water, the Eunuch enquires, what doth hinder me to be baptized? The reply is, if thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. He professed his faith in these words, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. His baptism by Philip immediately followed. See the whole account, Acts viii, 27—39.

After reading this account; it is not easy to suppress an observation, of this nature; that had a union with the apostolic Church, either pre-supposed or required an acknowledgment of a belief in any article not then expressed, it is strange that Philip did not inform the eunuch what it was, and request his subscription to it accordingly. No such thing, however, took place.

Another particular instance of the requirement of the Christian professor, we have in Acts xvi. 30—33. We allude to the history of the conversion, and consequent baptism of the jailor and his family. This man is represented as saying to Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?" They said unto him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." There is no necessity for many observations upon this historical fact. It may be answered by way of objection to the point we endeavour to establish, that to understand the expression quoted, in the sense for which we contend, makes the faith of the christian, merely historical, and of course inactive and inefficient. We reply; that this article of faith, proposed to the jailor, cannot be understood in opposition to other similar texts; and to corroborate the testimony

before adduced, we cite John xx, 31. "But these things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God ; and believing ye might have life through his name."—The connexion of the two passages, we have cited, justifies this inference, that a belief that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, is so far from being an inactive faith, that through it we have the communication of spiritual life.

In addition to the two particular instances we have produced; might be cited innumerable assertions of Christ and his apostles to the same purpose, though of a more general nature. Some of these, which seemed to form subjects on which our Saviour delighted to dwell, are calculated to prove not only his Sonship, but the nature of that filial relation in which he stood to God. This point will be distinctly considered under another branch of this subject. At present we shall only notice how essential an article it must have been in the view of him "who spake as never man spake," that his followers should be well grounded in the faith of his relation to his father. This is directly evinced by such declarations as these : John viii. 42, I proceeded and came forth from God. John viii. 24, If ye believe not that I am he, (the Christ) ye shall die in your sins. The same truth, in its general application, is made a subject of many observations by the apostle John. See 1. John, iv. 2, 3. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God : and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is not of God. Again, chapter v. verse 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. See also Romans x, 6—9. But the righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven ? (that is, to bring Christ down from above :) or who shall descend into the deep ? (that is, to bring Christ up again from the dead.) But what saith it ? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart : that is the word of faith which we preach ; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. From this declaration of the Apostle, the following inferences seem deducible.

1. That the requirements of the righteousness of faith are plain, simple and few in number. They are only two when particularised ; and these having respect to the person and office of Christ.

2. That the confession required was the word of faith which the apostles preached, and of course, with great propriety made

the whole sum and substance of the article; which the Christian was required to subscribe.

3. That this article embraced two particulars:—1, Confession with the mouth; that Jesus was the Christ. 2, Which confession was to proceed from a belief in the heart that God had raised him from the dead.

Were any additional testimony thought necessary, to support or elucidate this important theory; and were it required to find a proof, competent to demonstrate that an acknowledgment of the Sonship and Messiahship of Christ was all that was requisite to become the basis of the Christian church; in this case we should cite an account recorded in Matthew xvi, 13—18. Christ is there represented as asking his disciples, this question, "Whom do men say that I the son of man am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets. He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Here we have Peter's plain confession of the truth as a Christian, his answer to the query that his master had proposed. Next follows Christ's approbation of Peter's answer: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven. I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

This paragraph among other deductions affords the following—1, That our Saviour seemed desirous that his disciples might express their opinion of his character, their faith in his person, and therefore having heard the opinions of others, he gave the question this form, "Whom say ye that I am?" 2, That Peter's confession embraced the truth, in such a manner, that Jesus gave it a distinguishing mark of his approbation, by declaring that it was not a revelation of flesh and blood.—3, That Peter's confession was of such a nature, that it was to be employed as the foundation of the Christian Church. "On this rock, will I build my church."

Presuming that sufficient evidence has been adduced to strengthen and support the proposition assumed; at least, that the passages cited may have a tendency to awaken a spirit of enquiry, and to induce our readers to search the scriptures for further light; we shall take leave of this article, and next consider as was proposed,

II. The evidence on which this profession of faith will rest.

It is not only true that all faith which is genuine, rests upon rational evidence, proportionate to the point believed ; but all profession must be made and be founded upon the same basis. This is a fact established by the whole voice of reason and revelation. It is supported too, by a consideration of the circumstance in which mankind generally, but particularly the members of the Christian church, may be placed. The latter may and often will be "asked a reason of the hope that is in them." This it is their duty to give, with meekness and fear. But how shall they frame such an answer ? It is evident, they cannot satisfy the querist, but by offering a substantial reason for their hope.

The term reason, therefore, has respect to the testimony or evidence, on which the Christian's hope is founded ; and this evidence it is now our duty to consider in its various particulars.

In this case a text presents itself, which for distinction sake, may be called a key text, and of which we shall have occasion to make a considerable use in our progress through this article. John xx, 31—"But these things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing, ye might have life through his name."

To what does the Evangelist refer, as being written ? We answer ; the signs which Jesus did. What was the high object of his signs and miracles, which he wrought, and of the succeeding publication of them to the world ? We reply ; that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.—Was there any other object ? There was. The object we first noticed, though really necessary, was still, nothing more than subordinate or subservient to another ; that believing we might have life through his name. This analysis of the above passage gives us a view of the evidence, on which the Christian profession rests ; while it discovers the great end of our faith in the Son of God.

Our discoveries in these points, are greatly assisted by several passages of Scripture, explanatory of the method in which God deals with us, as rational beings ; and likewise exhibiting the ways in which the foregoing truth obtains our belief. We are taught that Jesus Christ is the "brightness of his father's glory and the express image of his person." This text alone will support the idea, that Jesus as an angel of peace, and the Messenger of the covenant possesses all the divine qualities that dwell in God.

The necessity and propriety of this exhibition and the man-

ner in which it is made, will appear, from a few considerations. 1, Mankind had formed very incorrect and false notions of God. It was to eradicate these and produce different views of the universal father, and thereby save mankind from darkness, sin and death, that the Son of God was manifested. 2, The Gospel supposes an assimilation or conformity of the creature to the Creator, in which conformity, his happiness now consists, in proportion as the work is effected upon him; but there can be no assimilation or conformity, without a model or image, the qualities and features of which are to be imparted to the thing that needs such conformity. These statements shew us the moral fitness of an exhibition of the divine nature and the absolute necessity that such an exhibition should be made by the Son of God.

There are two methods which exist in the very nature of things, in which we are made capable of reasoning, and arriving at truths. We may reason from cause to effect, or from effect to cause; but it is just to remark that although one or both of these modes may sometimes be adopted; yet some subjects require one preference to another. This observation applies to the case we are considering, in the following manner:— Christ as the Son and image of God is represented under the figure of a stream from a fountain, and a branch from a root.— See Psalm xlii, 4, compared with John viii, 42. See also Psalm lxxx, 15, Isaiah iv, 2, xi, 1, Jeremiah xxiii, 5, Zechariah iii, 8, and various other texts. In these instances God seems to be pleading his own cause, by manifesting to man his own nature. This he does by directing the mind to employ its active powers by looking from the stream to the source, from the branch to the root, from the effect to the cause; and this method applied to such a subject, under its particular circumstances, has the preeminency.

We are further assisted in a collection of the evidence of Christ's Sonship, by a consideration of those moral attributes of God, which of all others are particularly distinguished in the pages of revelation. The union of these in Jesus, places the truth of his filial relation to God upon the surest base.— We have reference to the wisdom, power and love which forever characterise the works of the Supreme Being. Wisdom is a necessary quality in all arrangements, in every thing that supposes or contemplates a happy result. It looks from cause to effect, and scans with minute exactness the relations and connexions of things. It discovers all obstacles, either very obvious or more latent, and provides against every opposing

sense. In these respects, Christ was styled by the apostle, with vast propriety, "the wisdom of God." But as wisdom without power, accomplishes nothing, this quality will demand an accurate definition. It is that by which a system projected in wisdom is carried into operation. It is that by which every cause is made to produce its own effect, without the least danger of any frustration. In these instances, Christ is the "power of God," and must, as in his resurrection, be acknowledged "the Son of God with power." See I Corinthians, i. 24. Philippians, iii. 10. But as wisdom without power would produce no valuable end; so both united, without love, could never subserve any gracious purpose; inasmuch as without this exalted principle, they might be employed to destroy as well as to save. It remains, therefore, to consider the character of Jesus as set forth, and demonstrated to man, by his united labors of love; that believing on him, by the things that are written, "we may have life through his name."

The Christian dispensation proposes as a maxim, on the truth and certainty of which we may rely—"by this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." On this proposition we may with safety build an argument. If the disciple is directed to possess love as a distinguishing mark or badge of his discipleship; then if the disciple is not above his Lord; the Lord and Master must be known and distinguished by the same characteristic. Indeed, the founders of all systems, and the systems themselves, receive, or ought to receive our credit or not, in proportion to the good which they propose and finally produce. This observation may lead us to compare in our minds, the specific merits of different systems and their founders. Almost all have made great professions of regard to the general welfare of mankind, but this is all in which they have in any degree resembled the religion of Jesus. Mahomet, as well as many other succeeding authors of systems, could profess much zeal for the interest and happiness of mankind; but his doctrine and theirs must be propagated by fire and sword, by blood, incarceration, tortures and death. Now if by these marks we know and distinguish the spirit and disposition of such infuriated sectarians; why can we not by a rule equally as safe, believe, receive, acknowledge and appreciate the mild spirit of Jesus, the Son of God and Saviour of the world? Of such exercise of the mind, happily, we have many luminous examples. The woman of Samaria is convinced of this, that Jesus was the Christ, from his telling her all things that ever she did. This woman's report, though

only second hand testimony, produces conviction upon the minds of many Samaritans. But when Jesus had taken up his abode with those Samaritans, who besought him to tarry with them; then many more believed, because of his own word; and said unto the woman, now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. John iv. 39—42. What was it, we enquire, of which these Samaritans were convinced? We answer, that Jesus was the Christ, and consequently the Son of God. By the force of what evidence were they convinced? By the energy of his word, which they heard, by which they knew that he was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Having noticed these memorable instances of the convincing efficacy of the Redeemer's word, we may turn to consider his mighty works, in the general and particular views in which they are presented; at least as far as circumstances will admit. Generally, we enquire, would these prove sufficiently strong to show that Jesus was the Son of God? Not unless they possessed these marks. They must be the works which no other man did; and they must be works of love, labors of kindness; and performed upon an ample scale; and their benevolent effect must be extensive. You ask, why they must possess this last criterion. We answer, that the theory and practice of his religion might be united. He directed his followers to love their enemies; to pray for those that despitefully used and persecuted them. As without this spirit they could not be his disciples, so neither without the same disposition would Jesus have been what he was, the Christ, the Son of God, which God is love.—All religions but his have been and are contracted and partial. They are very accommodatiug systems. They charmingly quadrate with men's mean, selfish, and malevolent spirits. But they possess no better qualities, no higher marks of their celestial origin, than the systems and dispositions of the Scribes and Pharisees; the publicans and sinners of old. "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" The fiercest banditti, who live by unjustifiable depredation upon the rights of others, will exercise benevolence to one another. But christianity must possess more enlarged qualities. Yes, Jesus, thou son of thy father's love; we know that thou art the Christ, for thy works are such as no other man did, not only in kind but in degree.—The bungling and clumsy imitations of spiritual Egyptian magicians have all failed. The rod of the prophet of Israel hath

swallowed up their rods. A minute detail of all the "mighty works" which Jesus wrought, and which "were written, that we might believe that he is the Christ, the Son of God," cannot be expected in so brief a description. We have glanced at the general principles, to which the human mind has reference in the establishment and support of a belief in evangelical truth.

We may now attend to a summary of the works of the Son of God, as exhibited by himself on a particular occasion.—John, who was then in prison, had heard of the works of Christ. To ascertain who he was, which at present it seems he did not know; he sent two of his disciples, saying, art thou he that should come, or look we for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Matthew xi, 2—5. This, as has been said, contains a summary of our Redeemer's labors of love; and the account was intended as an answer to John's question, and as evidence to prove the character of him who gave it. No answer could have been so proper, nor subserved so well the interest of the cause in question. The five first items in the account, respect the care and attention of Christ to the temporal and bodily wants of mankind. By this is proved, that "we have not an high-priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities." The sixth and last article has relation to our spiritual state, and demonstrates the Saviour's character in a most clear and conspicuous view. "The poor have the gospel preached to them." That gospel which is glad tidings of exceeding great joy, which brings life and immortality to light, is freely preached to the poor; its richest treasures are unfolded to the "miserable, the blind and naked." Of him who doth this, we may truly say, "No man can do these things except God be with him. Truly this was a righteous man. Truly this was the Son of God."

As every tree is known by its fruit, we have, by this rule, which we think is not here missapplied, learnt that the character and spirit of Jesus is best known by his works. We have seen that these labors respected the general good and happiness of man; that neither his wisdom nor power were ever exercised to render the world miserable. We have the pleasure to believe that our faith in Jesus, rests upon a sure basis; and that the works which he performed, testify of him, that "he was the Christ the Son of God."

We shall conclude these observations, with reference to one or two instances, selected from many, in which a testimony was given to the character of our Lord, being produced by his mighty works. Then was brought unto him, one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, is not this the Son of David? Matthew xii, 22, 23. Again, And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel—Matthew xv, 30, 31. The simplicity, plainness and appropriateness of these scriptural accounts, prevents the necessity of any comment; and we need not multiply examples.

We pass to consider in the third place, the necessity of this simplicity and unity, in the profession of the Christian faith.

This point may be successfully argued on several important principles, some of them of a general nature, others more particular.

1. From the very nature of the simple proposition which requires our faith, we are authorised to say, that if it were proper to make addition, Christ, or his Apostles by his direction, would have made it. And for this, a sufficient reason might have been alledged; such an addition made by Christ or his Apostles, would have had a tendency to prevent the introduction of error, through the unskilfulness of others, who might afterwards attempt to do it, without a precedent. But we find no such additions were made nor authorized. The reason which appears from the general principle here laid down; and will be more fully discovered from other considerations.

2. The unity of the spirit is to be preserved among Christians in the bond of peace. It is worthy our notice, how frequent terms expressive of unity, occur in the Christian dispensation. To the members of the Christian communion, there is one God the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one calling or vocation, one hope of that calling. To the Christian also, as his Lord is one, so is his name one and as is his name so is his praise. Now unity of faith, or it is sometimes called "being of one heart and one mind" the result of unity in the objects of faith.

Where the objects of faith are multiplied, articles of belief and systems of faith are always proportionably accumulated.

all at last, they result in what an Apostle calls, "diverse and strange doctrines, doctrines of men, and doctrines of devils." Nor is it to be wondered at; for wherever there are many doctrines, they must be diverse, else they are not doctrines, in the plural, but doctrine, in the singular. But when the truth, as it is in Jesus, is considered in the scriptures, it is remarkable how impressively its unity is expressed. Moses says, my doctrine shall drop as the rain. Isaiah asks, whom shall he make to understand doctrine? The people were astonished at our Saviour's doctrine; the reason of which is rendered; he taught as one having authority and not as the scribes. Christ says, if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine. The ancient disciples are said to have continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship. We read of a form of doctrine which was delivered. Paul directs Titus, in doctrine, to shew uncorruptness. To Timothy, he speaks of a doctrine according to Godliness. We are informed of the principles of the doctrine of Christ; by which we learn that although the principles were many, yet unity in doctrine was preserved. The foregoing references are but few in number, compared with all wherein the same thing is expressed; but they will serve to confirm and establish the point in question. We may however search for the ill consequences of a neglect of simplicity and unity in faith. What has divided and subdivided the world into so many sects, such a number of religious departments? What cause has erected so many partition walls, daubed with the untempered mortar of spiritual pride? What circumstance has given rise to so much bitterness, wrath, strife, evil surmisings, jealousies, uncharitableness and persecutions? We answer; these effects are to be traced to the cause we have mentioned, viz. a want of unity in faith and objects of faith. People, who do not, as the Apostle says, hold the head, from whom the whole body by joints and bands receiveth nourishment, can easily multiply articles of faith. These are sometimes so numerous, that it is no wonder, if a man whose retentive powers are not strong, being asked whether he believed in such or such an article, should be obliged to turn to his creed and examine whether it were there, before he answered the question. Besides, if one man, or body of men, have a right to make additions to the requirement of faith and the object of faith too, then others have the same right; and when these supposed privileges are used, one has an equal right with another to threaten, to fulminate, to be uncharitable, to employ fine, imprisonment or death, if he have the power, in case of

nonsubscription to his diverse and strange doctrines. Let not our readers wish to lay all these evils at a foreign door. Let them not think of a tour to Rome, to summon evidence against the supposed anti-christian Babylon. The mother of harlots will save them the trouble. She will come to them. She has traversed all Christendom already, upon her scarlet-coloured beast, inscribed with names of blasphemy, and in her destroying progress, has carried proof positive, that want of unity and simplicity in faith, has produced manifold evils. But the servants and followers of the Lamb, who are willing to abide by the direction of their leader, view the operation of these evils, as a kind of evidence which strengthens their resolution, to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

3. Believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; all other necessary truth will follow of course. Truth, collectively, is of such a nature, that one part maintains a connexion with another; and one thing results or flows from another. This may be made apparent, by the simplest figures and images in nature. When we believe in the rising of the sun, we necessarily believe, the world will have light. The latter truth flows from the former. When we are convinced that a stream of water flows from such a fountain, we then apprehend that it will be in quality like its source. When we imbibe this water, and our senses testify to its refreshing nature, then we are convinced that we are right in our judgment, that the stream is emitted from such a source, if we had ever heard of the fountain before, and our information was correct. But if not, then a draught from the stream, demonstrates to us, what qualities compose the fountain.

The application of these figures, will be of great use, as it will present two classes of people, who might be benefitted by the modes of communication we have noticed. 1, If there were any, who, in the days Christ was upon earth, had correct views of the true God, from the writings of Moses and the prophets, or from any other possible source, they would receive Jesus as the Christ; knowing that his character corresponded with that of God. These, having previously drank of the fountain, would discover in the stream the same qualities and be convinced of its origin from similarity. 2, There were those, and theirs was the greatest number, who knew not God, at least as respected his love to the world; for men have generally been more willing to confess his power than his goodness; these, by participating the stream, would learn the qualities of the fountain. Indeed, we find, that when the people

who saw the mighty works of Jesus, and had discovered in them, strong evidence of the power of God, generally, were convinced of his being the Messiah. Thus we see one truth flowing from another, as a necessary consequence. We believe that Jesus proceeded and came forth from God ; this involves the idea, that he was the son of God. We next discover that he was the Christ (anointed) of God. But as an unction or anointing always implies an office and an object for which the office is conferred, we find that his office is regal, he is a King or Prince. The object of his becoming such, is this, "to give repentance and remission of sins." This act is in essence the salvation of God. In this manner, we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Like the Samaritans we know that Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

4. Another additional reason for this unity and simplicity in faith, is found in the very capacity and situation in which the believer in Christ is represented. This may be well expressed by a similitude. When a child is received into a school, there is one simple proposition which it is necessary the pupil should believe ; viz. that his preceptor is able to instruct him, in the science which he wishes to study ; for if he does not believe this, it is hard to conceive, that he will apply for instruction. — And again, it is evident, that if he knows already all that his teacher requires of one whose term of study is finished, there is no need of his admission ; and to call him a pupil would be a perversion of language. Again, it would be equally absurd for the teacher to require a profession of the knowledge of all abstruse sciences, as a necessary qualification to the pupil's admission. How would it appear, for the instructor to say to the applicant for admission, "My child, I am ever happy to see youth enquiring after knowledge. It always gives me real pleasure to receive such as members of this literary institution, over which I have the honor to preside. But you are not insensible that certain qualifications are necessary to your reception here. You must believe and be able to demonstrate that the earth revolves upon its axis. You must prove to me your acquaintance with algebra, with astronomy, geography, navigation, and all other sciences." This language would indeed appear strange, when we consider these are the things which the proposed scholar wishes to learn ; and if he be acquainted with them already, what need of his entering the school, and what shall he learn if he does ?

The reader will readily apply this to what we are considering as a reason for unity and simplicity of faith. The voice

out of the cloud concerning Christ, is, this is my beloved son, hear ye him. This beloved son, whom we are commanded to hear, saith, learn of me. But if it be required, that we know in the first place all that is to be learned of Christ, and that previous to admission into his school; what shall we learn afterwards? But we never find this to be the case. Peter was long a pupil, before he knew the propriety of preaching the Gospel to a Gentile. The disciples in general, sat long at the feet of Jesus, before they understood many of his sayings respecting his sufferings and death. Paul, while called Saul of Tarsus, persecuted Christ in his members; but being a chosen vessel to bear his Redeemer's name among the Gentiles, has but one simple truth stated to him, the acknowledgment and belief of which were necessary to his declaring Christ publicly. The voice of him who arrested him in his mad career, said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. Like a submissive pupil, Saul enquires, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? He is referred to Annanias for some instruction, but however he is told, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of the things which thou hast seen, and of those in the which I will afterwards appear unto thee." Compare Acts ix. 5—6. Acts xxvi. 16. From these accounts the following things appear—1st. That Saul was convinced that it was Jesus whom he persecuted. 2d. That this belief, evinced by his enquiry, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? entitled him to the fellowship and instruction of Annanias.—3d. That Saul did not receive, at the time of his conversion, all the knowledge which might be obtained; for if so, the spirit would not have spoken "of the things in which he would afterwards appear to him." 4th. Yet it appears from Acts ix. 20, that Saul was not only accepted as a believer, but as a preacher; for straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

With these observations, we are induced to close the present subject of our discussion. We have considered one simple proposition, variously stated in the New Testament, as the only article necessary to be believed, to entitle the believer to the fellowship of the primitive Christian Churches. An exhibition has been made of the evidence on which this proposition rests. The necessity of unity and simplicity has been argued upon several principles. The inferences which we draw, must comport with the nature of the subject. If unity of faith tends to unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace; then, any thing directly opposite must produce all the evils we have mentioned.

And it will appear, that it is only by simplifying the nature, and abridging the number of those articles of faith, which have so long confused and disordered the minds of men, that Christians can walk in love with one another, as Christ hath loved them.

Edw. A. Turner.

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, UPON FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

QUESTION—"As we are taught to believe that our Salvation is connected with and dependant upon forgiveness of sin, and as we are also instructed that God "will render to every man according to his work;" it is required how far such a retribution consists with forgiveness, and how we are said to be forgiven while made subject to punishment?"

As it is evident that this question embraces a subject of great importance, so it is equally evident that the discussion of it ought to be pursued with caution, clearness of investigation, simplicity of argument, and a manifest direction to the support and furtherance of piety and morality. The better to embrace our subject consistently with the foregoing suggestions, the following method is proposed:

I. Define and illustrate the nature of that Salvation which is connected with and dependant on the forgiveness of sins.

II. Enquire into the nature of the forgiveness of sins, and the action of that grace by which the before described Salvation is effected. And

III. Define the nature of that retribution which is implied in the expression, "render to every man according to his work;" and show the consistency of such retribution with the before described forgiveness; and the necessity of this forgiveness and retribution in order to produce our Salvation.

Our first object, then, is to define and illustrate the nature of that Salvation which is connected with and dependent on the forgiveness of sins.

Two important sections present themselves as necessarily embraced in this first part of our labour. 1st. What are the saved, saved from? And 2d. Into what situation are the saved brought by Salvation? In the discussion of these sections it will be necessary to depart from the general opinion of orthodoxy, and wherever this is the case, it is thought advisable to name it in the introduction of a subject, so that the reader may be the better prepared to meet with ideas which do not accord with the opinions of authors in general on divinity. It

is generally understood, that a gospel salvation is a salvation from what is called *vindictive justice*, which is supposed to exist in God, and which requires a never ending unmerciful punishment to be inflicted on all the sinners of mankind. Should the reader object to the term *unmerciful*, as applied to the endless punishment which divine justice is supposed to require, the objection will undoubtedly be dropped, unless it can be made to appear that there is mercy in such punishment. It is conceived that the supposition of this vindictive justice involves a number of difficulties inconsistent with the character of God as exhibited in the scriptures, and, of course, derogatory to the Gospel scheme of Salvation, and also to the moral character of a disciple of Christ. God is represented in the scriptures as willing in himself, and purposing, according to his good pleasure, the salvation of sinners. See Eph. i, 9, &c. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of time, he might gather together in one all things in Christ." And in the 11th verse, the Apostle speaks of an inheritance to which the saved were *predestinated*. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being *predestinated* according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Now it is evident, beyond all controversy, that if God were possessed of a *vindictive justice*, which required the endless misery of all sinners, it could not consist with that justice that he should purpose, according to his own good pleasure, the salvation so clearly pointed out in the above passage. The difficulty evidently involved, is the representation of the will, pleasure and purpose of God in direct opposition to the requirements of his justice.

Again, God is represented as loving us before we loved him, and while we were dead in trespasses and sins; and that this love was the cause of the Saviour's dying for us. See Eph. ii. 4, 5. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Again 1 John, iv. 10. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." If God loved us, while we were *dead* in trespasses and sin, with so great a love as to send his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, it must be evident, to the candid reader, that the supposition of a justice in God which required the endless punishment of man-

kind, in a state of sin, is, in every sense, opposed to that great love with which the above scripture says, God loved us.

Secondly. Of course this erroneous supposition will be found in direct opposition to the declared object of the Saviour, which object is plainly set forth in the following scriptures.—See St. John, iii, 17—“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” I. John, iv. 14. “And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” If the salvation of the world be the declared object of the Saviour’s mission, the supposition that divine justice requires the endless misery of the world of mankind, is in direct opposition to this declared object. Here, perhaps, it may be said that the dispensation of gospel grace being designed to save the sinner from this deserved punishment which justice requires, the opposition of this supposed just punishment to the dispensation of gospel grace ought not to be urged against the justice of such punishment. Reply—of two opposites, when it can be said that one is just, it follows of course, that the other is unjust. If, therefore, the supposition be correct that divine justice requires the endless unmerciful punishment of sinful man, the opposite dispensation of gospel grace must of necessity be equally as obnoxious to divine justice as the sinner is whom it aims to save from this just punishment.

Thirdly, it was suggested that this supposed justice is in opposition to the moral character of a disciple of Christ, which will evidently appear to be the case, as it must be granted that the moral character of the disciple is similar to that of the master, whose design and grand aim we have seen to be, in direct opposition to this supposed justice. Here the reader is requested to permit his mind to ponder the following question with candor. If there be a vindictive justice in God, which demands the endless unmerciful punishment of mankind, how can it be just for Christ the mediator, to save mankind from such punishment?

The mind which has never travelled out of the common road in respect to this subject, will naturally come, by the course of the above reasoning, to the following crisis. If divine justice do not demand endless punishment, it is very true that the scheme of salvation does not in that particular stand in opposition to justice; but if divine justice do not require *some punishment*, from which gospel grace is designed to save, there seems to be no salvation at all: and on the other hand, if it be admitted that justice demands any punishment, be it ever so

limited, from which gospel grace is designed to save, it establishes the principle against which the foregoing arguments are directed. The mind having formed this crisis, it seems to be in a suitable situation to consider the suggestion, that gospel grace is not designed to save the sinner from any deserved punishment. The maintenance of this suggestion will appear absolutely necessary, if we duly consider an important fact which forms one grand section of our general query, which is, that God will render to every man according to his work. If it be objected, that unless the sinner be saved from deserved punishment, he cannot be said to be saved by *grace*, the objection is rendered impotent by reversing the subject, which produces the following proposition. If the sinner do not receive a punishment from which divine mercy is disposed to save him, he cannot be said to receive a punishment which is just.

By this time it will undoubtedly appear evident to the reader, that the common opinion of saving sinners from deserved punishment, by grace, is an opinion which sets the divine attributes of justice and mercy at variance, which is doing great injustice to the character of the divine being. In forming and arranging arguments illustrative of subjects founded on the authority of scripture, it is most reasonable that we use the sacred testimony in such a way as not to render one part void in order to establish another. If we are assured by the sacred text that God will render to every man according to his work, there appears no way whereby a salvation from justly deserved punishment can be effected without making this testimony void.

Having shown the impropriety of the common notion of salvation, it may be proper to give a direct answer to the question, "What are the saved saved from?" Which answer will be rendered unexceptionable and perfectly satisfactory, being found in the following scriptures. Mat. i. 21. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Acts iii. 26. "Unto you first, God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Col. i. 13. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son." St. John, xii. 46. "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

That this salvation from sin, this turning away from iniquities, and this deliverance from the power of darkness, is a salvation in which justice is engaged, may be seen by the following. Isaiah xlv. 21. "Who hath declared this from ancient

time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? And there is no God else besides me; a just God, and a Saviour: there is none besides me." Zech. ix. 9. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation."

A salvation from sin is not only consonant with the very nature of justice, but it is equally consistent with every precept which justice has enjoined on mankind; and it is likewise necessary in order that the sinner may be saved to his own advantage and for his own happiness; whereas a salvation from deserved punishment would be directly opposed to those three important subjects. It could be of no advantage to a sinner to save him from the punishment which divine justice has attached to his sins, if the sinner still continues in sin.

Secondly: The situation into which the saved are brought by salvation, claims our notice. Salvation from sin brings the creature into a state of righteousness, holiness, and active obedience to God and his commandments. That power which delivers from the power of darkness, translates into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Reconciliation to God, love to his lovely attributes, sincere love to fellow-beings, divine light, heavenly wisdom, joy unspeakable, and the peace of God, are some of the blessed characteristics of the happy situation into which salvation from sins, brings the saved. The saved being led by the spirit, bear its fruits, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, against which there is no law, but the law of God is fulfilled in the soul by those divine virtues. Justification is one important characteristic of the situation of the saved. The law, in all its requirements, being fulfilled in the soul, justification is the consequence. This shows that the salvation is perfectly consistent with justice. There is no divine law which opposes the reconciliation of the unreconciled. The saved therefore, are brought into a state wherein all their moral faculties harmonize with all the revealed attributes of God.

The life of God is the life of the ransomed soul. This is the life which was manifested in Jesus, which is the true God and eternal life.

Our second general enquiry is to ascertain the nature of the forgiveness of sin, and the action of that grace by which the before described salvation is effected.

Forgiveness of sin is an act originating in the nature of God, and harmonizes both justice and mercy in the same action.—

If this can be made to appear, from the testimony of truth, it will happily accord with the arguments on the first general query, and will also serve as a lamp, by which the remaining section will be illuminated. "God is love." Forgiveness is a manifestation of love and one of its inseparable qualities. See Psalm cxxx, 3, 4. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." In this text the following ideas are manifest:

1st. That God does not mark iniquities in the sense expressed in the text.

2d. That if he should mark iniquities in the sense of the text, none could stand. And

3d. That there is forgiveness with God, as an abiding quality of his nature, for which he is to be revered. It would be time lost which should be spent in proving what must be self-evident to every candid enquirer; and surely nothing can be more self-evident than that justice and mercy have their origin in the same eternal fountain of Love, which is God. There can be, therefore, no radical difference in their nature, any more than there can be two or more radically different principles in one indivisible essence.

Justice and mercy are only different names, whereby we distinguish between different operations or manifestations of the same divine nature of love; and as they have their origin in love, so they must of necessity be found united in love in their final ultimatum. Justice is that action or manifestation of love, by which divine requirements are enjoined on moral, accountable beings, and by which also proportionate rewards and punishments are assigned and awarded to all moral actions. Justice, in the foregoing operations, being a modification of divine love, never deviates from the nature of love in the smallest degree, and therefore never violates the designs of its contemporary manifestation of love, which we call mercy; and therefore never becomes unmerciful.

Mercy is that action or manifestation of love, by which that forgiveness which is with God is manifested to the transgressor, in which manifestation we are brought to see,

1st. The divine fitness of all the requirements of justice, and their perfect loveliness, being nicely fitted, planned and directed according to the moral propriety, and the happiness of the creature.

2dly. The goodness of God in awarding tribulation and anguish to every soul of man who doeth evil, as a mean directed

in infinite wisdom to render sin truly hateful to the understanding, and obedience lovely.—And

3dly. The divine will and purpose of God in the moral holiness and everlasting happiness of his creature, in the enjoyment of himself. Here we may say of mercy similar to what we said of justice—that mercy in the foregoing operations being a modification of divine love, never deviates from the nature of love in the smallest degree, and therefore never violates the designs of its contemporary manifestation of divine love which we call justice, and therefore never becomes unjust.

These manifestations of divine love correct the erroneous notions existing in the mind of the sinner, and show God to be a father and a friend, directing his moral government for the good of his creatures, who are dependent on him for all things.

By correcting the ideas of the mind, and by illuminating the understanding, as just described, the soul is brought to love God in the full exercise of every faculty. This love to God is a necessary consequence arising from the manifestation of God's love to the creature, therefore "we love him because he first loved us." The forgiveness of sin as seen in these operations effects the destruction of sin in the soul, for sin dies the moment the soul is filled with love, as love is the fulfilling of the law; and when the law is thus fulfilled it can see no sin; therefore the very nature and action of the spirit of forgiveness is to take away sin, to destroy and make a full end of all iniquity in the soul where alone it is found. Thus we see that the forgiveness of sin is an act which originates in the nature of God, and harmonizes both justice and mercy in the same action.

Divine justice, which too many represent as unmerciful, vindictive and revengeful, is a manifestation of divine love, and requires nothing but love, which requirement is fulfilled in the creature to the full acceptation of justice, by the gracious action of mercy, in which that forgiveness which is with God is displayed to the understanding, which produces this love in the soul. Here we see the creature saved according to our first proposition; not from deserved punishment for crimes committed, but from a sinful disposition, and from the commission of sins, and of course prevented from incurring or deserving further correction.

It may be proper, in this place, to notice some scriptural arguments to show that forgiveness does not imply an act contrary to the requirements of justice. See *Mat. xviii. 32, 33.* "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desirest me: shouldest thou not also have had compas-

sion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? Here, he who had been forgiven, did not forgive his fellow servant, therefore he is called *wicked*; but he could not with propriety be called *wicked* for not dispensing with justice. Nor could the example of forgiveness which the Lord gave his servant, be justly binding on him, unless it be granted that justice in the strictest sense was satisfied with such example, and if it were, it could not be satisfied without it. Divine justice, like every other attribute of God, can never be satisfied with any thing but its own requirements. For instance, truth is in its nature in direct opposition to falshood; it requires its own image in all moral beings, and never can be satisfied with falshood. Wisdom is the opposite of folly, and never can be pleased with it. So justice requires *perfect right* to take place in all things, and in all creatures, and it can never be satisfied without obtaining its object. Justice had a claim on this unforgiving servant, nor could he be released from the tormentors till he had paid the utmost farthing that was due. The charge made against him was for not forgiving his fellow servant, as his Lord had set him the example in forgiving him, he therefore was found delinquent in the sum which he did not forgive to his fellow-servant, and until this was paid, which could be paid only by forgiveness, he must be, according to the requirements of retributive justice, under the controul of his tormentors.—The application which our blessed Saviour makes of this subject is every way calculated to make the matter plain on which I am reasoning. See verse 35. “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” If justice did not require this forgiveness, surely our heavenly Father would not, in all instances, award a heavy punishment to those who did not forgive.

Though the subject may be thought sufficiently illustrated, it may not be improper to subjoin the testimony of the beloved disciple, which is so very pertinent in this case. See 1. John, i. 9. “If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Two important ideas are suggested by this passage, which I have endeavored to make appear in the foregoing reasoning.

1st. That justice requires forgiveness, and can never be satisfied without it. And

2d, That forgiveness of sin is not the releasing of the sinner from the punishment due to crimes committed, but has its ac-

tion on, or manifestation to the creature, in cleansing the sinner from all unrighteousness.

The opinion that it is just not to forgive sin, has established the spirit of revenge, which is the opposite of the spirit of forgiveness, in the minds of many, on the principle of this supposed justice. On this principle the kind and merciful Father of our spirits is frequently represented as the most revengeful tyrant, never to be satisfied while the power to revenge remains. Whatever name we give to the opposite of forgiveness, this opposite must of necessity be considered as opposite to justice as it is to mercy, for justice and mercy are equally the offspring of divine love ; therefore, whatever opposes one must of course oppose the other also.

It is not unlikely that an objection will suggest itself in the minds of those who wish to support the opposite opinion of forgiveness, of the following nature. Then the sinner may demand forgiveness on the principle of justice ! And if he have a right to demand it, his receiving it lays him under no obligation of thankfulness. This objection urges our subject still farther into the light, and is answered as follows. Neither forgiveness, nor the justice of forgiveness, either originates from the guilty, or has its abiding with him. The guilty sinner is in opposition to the spirit of divine love, which is the fountain of all the divine attributes ; therefore is under a moral impossibility of demanding even justice to himself ; for if he could, in a moral sense, be even reconciled to have justice executed, he would not, in a moral sense, be a sinner, because he would not be opposed to justice.

Forgiveness, and the justice of forgiveness, originate in, and have their abidance with God ; he alone is able to forgive, and to move his creatures to exercise the same divine virtue.

The gracious reception and bountiful mercy which the returning prodigal experienced in his father's house, were by no means blessings to which any virtue in him gave him a claim. His own confession shows that in his opinion, which opinion was formed consistently with his own character, he was no more worthy to be either called his father's son, or to be treated as such ; and these are the feelings and opinions which every true penitent must feel and entertain of himself. But the father of the prodigal reasoned from different principles, and deduced the justice of the mercy shown to his son from data within himself, and which lay beyond the reach of the prodigal's comprehension, and to which the elder son, who built his claims on the merit of his own works, was equally

blind. As the elder brother supposed that he had a just claim, by virtue of his obedience, to every thing which he needed, he was in a situation to oppose the doctrine for which his father contended, and the justice of the mercy which he was disposed to show to his penitent offspring.

As was just observed, the feelings and opinion which the prodigal had entertained of himself, are those which every true penitent must feel and entertain of himself. But our heavenly father being possessed of that unbounded love which is stronger than death, which many waters cannot quench, nor floods drown, in justice to his moral perfections, forgives our sins according to the riches of his grace, and by this forgiveness vindicates his character against every unreasonable charge which the alienated soul has brought against it, leaving nothing to prevent the object of his love from loving him supremely with indescribable gratitude.

Should we disallow the divine character, the beauties and excellencies which the foregoing arguments are designed to illustrate, and suppose that God is possessed of the opposite of forgiveness, name it what we please, it is evident beyond all controversy that this opposition to forgiveness is as just in its degree, in the creature, as it is in the creator. But nothing in man can be more contrary to every principle of goodness than the opposite of forgiveness. Hence it is a fair conclusion that the opposite of forgiveness never existed in God. Though the special manifestation of that forgiveness which is ever with God, may be a new act in relation to the creature who receives such manifestation, and the time when such manifestation is made may justly be called the time when the sinner is forgiven, it would fall infinitely short of propriety to suppose that this act of forgiveness is new as it respects him who is the same yesterday, to day and forever.

Our third general proposition remains to be noticed, which is to define the nature of that retribution which is implied in the expression "render unto every man according to his work," and show the consistency of such retribution with the before described forgiveness, and the necessity of such retribution and forgiveness in order to produce our salvation.

In order to define the nature of this retribution, it is necessary, in the first place, to fix on the object which such retribution is designed to affect; and secondly it is necessary to define the ratio of reward or punishment which the work of the accountable creature merits or demerits, in relation to the object to which this retribution is directed.

With regard to the object which is promoted by the blessed reward with which our heavenly father is pleased to honor the work of moral righteousness, which work is performed by the moral and physical powers which are given to man, it is evident from scripture and reason that this object is not to establish the creature in an opinion of his independence, but the reverse. It is designed and wisely calculated to show the creature his infinite obligation to his creator for the gift of those moral and physical powers, by the proper exercise of which he is capable of sublime happiness. It is not to implant nor to cultivate the vain notion that our good works have procured for us the friendship of our creator, but to show us that our creator was always kindly disposed towards us, and that he created us for happiness, pursuant to the good pleasure of his own will. It is not to cherish the too prevalent opinion that the creature's merit insures him a title to eternal salvation, but to show us that all our acceptable virtues and the blessed rewards with which God has pleased to approbate them, are mere consequences resulting from that great salvation wrought by grace. In support of the above, see Eph. ii. 8, 9, 10. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

With regard to the object which is to be promoted by the punishment with which God is pleased to discountenance transgression, it is not to retaliate any injury done to him, for the supposition that God is injured by the sin of his creature necessarily establishes the idea that he is benefited by our virtue, which makes him in both cases dependent on us. That such an opinion is as contrary to scripture as it is to sound reason, may be seen by the following passages. Job xxxv. 6, 7, 8. "If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? Or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receivest he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." Psalm xvi. 2, 3. "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." But even if the absurd notion that God receives injury by our sins, be granted, yet it would be contrary to his revealed word for him to retaliate by injuring us in return. See Mat. v. 44, 48. "But I say unto

you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you ; that ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven ; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye ? Do not even the publicans the same ? And if you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others ? Do not even the publicans so ? Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect." Rom. xii. 20, 21. "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

After being fully convinced that God never awards punishment to the sinner from a principle of retaliation, it may still serve to illustrate the subject to allow that he does for the sake of seeing what must be the consequence deducible from such premises.

Allowing God to be injured by sin, and that he punishes the sinner according to his sins, with a design to support and gratify a principle of retaliation and revenge, of which he is possessed, the conclusion is, that he will injure the sinner exactly as much as the sinner has injured the Almighty, and no more ! Having carried this particular as far as appears necessary in order to show that the idea of punishment on the principle of retaliation is erroneous, I would close my remarks on the subject by observing, that if such a principle could be supported, the consequence generally supposed to follow must be necessarily given up, unless it be contended that the great, Jehovah must absolutely feel the ill effects of sin to the wasteless ages of his existence, this being the supposed duration of the retaliation !

The object to be promoted by the retribution signified by rewarding every man according to his work, in all cases where the work of the creature requires the rod of chastisement, may be easily understood by the following scriptures. See Prov. iii, 11, 12, "My son, despise not the chastising of the Lord ; neither be weary of his correction : for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." Heb. xii, 10, 11, "For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure ; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." Lam. iii, 31, 32, 33, "For the Lord will not cast off forever ; but though he cause grief, yet will he

have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.— For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.” The manifest object to be promoted by a just retribution for sin, according to the foregoing scriptures, is the *profit* which results to the creature by being made a partaker of *divine holiness*, which clearly shows that this retribution is directed by divine love as is so manifestly and particularly set forth in the above scriptures.

An objection to a general application of the foregoing passages will undoubtedly labour in some very candid minds, as the more common use of such scripture is to designate the merciful dealings of God with those for whom he entertains a more particular love than he does for sinners in general. To this objection, it is believed, the objector will find a satisfactory answer, in the following arguments and illustrations.

1st. As the objection necessarily supposes that God awards afflictions and tribulations to some with a gracious design to his moral holiness, and that to others he awards afflictions and tribulations without designing any good to the afflicted, the candid objector is required to examine carefully and see what disposition exists in the all-wise creator so different from love, which warrants this supposition. This disposition surely is not entitled to any appellation by which we distinguish the happy harmonious family of divine love, because it is manifestly in direct opposition to the nature and communications of Love.

2d. The general subject now under consideration is founded on that divine testimony, in which it is declared that God will render unto every man according to his deeds, which testimony is used in evidence by the apostle, to prove that there is no respect of persons with God.

If it be argued that God punishes some sinners from a disposition of love, for their spiritual profit, and that he punishes others from an entirely different disposition, it is required how the impartiality for which we conceive our heavenly father is so justly celebrated, is to be maintained.

3dly. If it be argued that the divine being grievously afflicts and forever casts off, and will never have mercy on some of the children of men, does not this argument stand in direct opposition to the unreserved and positive testimony above quoted from the prophet Jeremiah?

4thly. An illustration of this subject is obtained by examining the dealings of God with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. For his sins, against which the prophet Daniel admonished him, and for the pride of his heart in not acknowledging

his dependence on God, he was deposed of his glory and kingdom, deprived of his reason and understanding, driven from human society, and being possessed of the heart of a beast, he had his portion in the grass of the earth until seven times passed over him. Here is an astonishing example of God's disapprobation of sin, perhaps as much so as any particular circumstance recorded in scripture. However, all this just retribution was directed in conformity to that divine love, which like a band of iron and brass secured him as in the tender grass of the earth, and finally issued in bringing one of the most haughty, self-sufficient, and ungodly of tyrants into the deepest humility, and just sense of his dependence on the God of heaven, and to make the following acknowledgment. See Daniel iv. 37. "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." It is evident beyond contradiction, that God chastised the king of Babylon for his profit. It must likewise be granted that he rewarded, or rendered unto him according to his deeds; for the testimony is, that God will render unto every man according to his deeds. The unavoidable conclusion from these demonstrated facts, is, that in rewarding or rendering unto every man according to his work, the profit of the creature is the object to be promoted.

Lastly, in answer to the above objection, it is reasonable to urge the moral depravity on which the objection is founded; for it is evident, as has been proved from the word of God, that to render evil for evil is contrary to the revealed character of our heavenly father, and a sin which he reproves in us. And as it is evident that the objection not only tolerates this iniquity in ourselves and among men, but also charges it on our father who is in heaven, it ought to be rescinded.

We are assured that the correction exercised by our heavenly father is similar to that which a father exercises on his son in whom he delighteth. This is making use of the parental affections, and of the parental faithfulness, which being duly operative in unison, discover in a striking manner the administration of retributive justice as administered by God himself.—The faithful father will render unto his son according to his deeds; but never punishes his son from a disposition of revenge or retaliation, but from motives which the tenderest love and affection inspire, directing this retribution with all possible wisdom and prudence in such a way as to carry conviction to the mind of the chastened, that parental love is the moving

of this affection. Here is the nature of forgiveness, displayed in the dispensation of justice ; and the sole object is the good of the son, which is to be effected by taking away his sin. This retribution then is necessary in order to carry into effect the merciful designs of that forgiveness which is forever with God. The want of love in a parent not only gives his chastisements an unfavorable appearance, but renders them useless as to answering any laudable purpose. This want of love surely cannot be imputed to our heavenly father, and as it must be acknowledged that there is no lack of wisdom or power in him, so it must be acknowledged that the gracious purposes of all his dispensations will be accomplished in due time.

Let possibly a difficulty should labor in the mind respecting the ratio of punishment, as the text defines it to be according to our work, it may be expedient to illustrate this particular, in doing which it will fall in our way to show the distinction which it is proper to make between justice and mercy.

Though we have sufficiently proved that the design of chastisement is the profit of the chastised, yet the process by which the sinner is brought to experience this profit, perhaps ought more fully to be considered.

The most immediate object of chastisement is to produce true penitence in the transgressor ; and while the love of the divine being is exercising the rod of affliction for this special purpose, the administration of divine love is distinguished by the term *justice*. When the necessary work of repentance is fully effected, and the penitent feels his utter unworthiness to receive the least favor, judging from his own wicked character, the still abounding goodness of God is now gloriously manifested to the enraptured mind, now all filled with wonder to behold the goodness of him whom he had disobeyed ; this scene of divine favour is distinguished by the term *mercy*. These different terms are therefore not to distinguish different dispositions in God, but different manifestations which the same disposition in our heavenly father makes to his creature.

The ratio of punishment is to be measured in relation to two particular circumstances : the first is the state of moral turpitude into which the sinner has fallen ; and the second is, the situation of penitence into which this proportionate punishment is designed to bring him.

When the prodigal son had suffered enough to convince him of the evil nature of his conduct, and to humble him in his own estimation, it was sufficient. There was no revenge rank-

ling in the heart of the father which remained to be satisfied—after the son humbly confessed, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” It was then a suitable time for the open manifestations of love and mercy to be displayed to the infinite honor of the father, and to the unspeakable happiness of the son, now saved, not from deserved punishment, but from his prodigality and sin.

While it is readily acknowledged that the foregoing tract falls greatly short of embracing, so particularly, the various subjects which are necessarily connected with and allied to the general question under consideration, of what might reasonably be expected from arguments better constructed, or a treatise labored more largely, yet a humble hope is entertained that the most important subjects are made sufficiently plain to the understanding of the reader, as to contribute something to the promotion of piety towards God and morality among men.

It is conceived that whenever the divine character is consistently represented to the human mind, and man is taught to see a father in his creator, he will no longer be disposed to call him a hard master, but feeling his sonship in the father of his spirit, will strive to discharge the duties of piety and unfeigned devotion. And it is further believed that by taking our lessons of morality from the manifestations of the divine character, so wonderfully displayed in the economy of his universal goodness, our morality will naturally become well purified from all the evils of superstition, and will facilitate the desired object of our loving our neighbours as ourselves.

Amos B. B. B.

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION ON THE APPLICATION OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

QUESTION. As the Scriptures declare that Christ suffered the just for the unjust—and by his stripes we are healed—in what manner is an application made to our salvation, of his sufferings, so as to produce such an effect?

That all mankind are sinners, and that “there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,” but “by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,” who was “crucified,” and “whom God raised from the dead,”* will not be called in question in this discussion; as those facts are not

*Acts iv. 10, 12.

disputed by any who believe in divine revelation: neither shall we call in question the propriety or necessity of the death and sufferings of Christ; for being not "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," we cannot say that Christ ought not "to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory!"* But the only question now to be considered is, *In what manner is an application made to our salvation, of his sufferings, so as to produce such an effect?* Or in other words, *How does our salvation stand connected with the sufferings of Christ?* Or, *What bearing or relation has his death and sufferings with our salvation, so that it may be with propriety said, that "with his stripes we are healed?"*

The question being thus fully and fairly stated, an answer will now be attempted in a plain, short and concise, though as explicit a manner as our limits will admit.

Perhaps it may not be improper just to premise, that while the writer of this article makes no pretensions to infallibility, it is but just to remark, that all the light he has been able to obtain by any thing that he has read on this subject, has only convinced him that the Christian world, generally speaking, are very much in the dark respecting it. And though he is very far from supposing that he shall be able to give a full and satisfactory answer to the question proposed, yet as what he has thought proper to suggest may lead to further enquiry, he humbly solicits the serious and candid attention of the reader to the following remarks. For a subject of so much importance certainly merits our attention, and even if there have been heretofore no mistake respecting it, an investigation may not be improper, for it will only serve to confirm us more fully in the truth.

It is an idea among Christians that has gained almost universal consent, that "Sin, with respect to its object, is an infinite evil." "Sin, therefore, DESERVES an infinite, that is an everlasting punishment."† This idea has led many people to suppose that Deity is so incensed against his creature man by reason of sin, that "all mankind are under his wrath and curse, and made liable to the pains of hell forever." "God," however, "having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to everlasting life," appeared in the second person of the Godhead, "who being the eternal Son of God became man," and so continuing "to be God and man in two distinct natures," he executed the "office of a Priest in his once offering up him-

*St Luke, xxiv. 25, 26

†Smith's Letters to Belsham, p. 30.

self a sacrifice, to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God.*

From the above statement it will be clearly seen, that in the view of this principle, which has been considered as the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the chief object of the death and sufferings of Christ was "to satisfy divine justice"; or in other words, to appease omnipotent wrath! or placate the implacable Deity! †

Having united in this general principle, Christians have here split, and taking different roads, according to their different views of the character of God, or their different modes of reasoning from the scriptures on this subject, have been at perpetual variance.

Some have contended that the sufferings and death of Christ, or the atonement, which has been considered the same thing, was designed only to answer the requirements of the divine law, and open a door whereby God could be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth, or in other words, be just in the salvation of sinners; whereas, had it not been for the death of Christ, his justice would have sentenced all to endless misery. But yet such ones contend, that the sacrifice was not designed for one any more than another, nor for a part any more than for the whole, for it required an infinite sacrifice "to satisfy divine justice," in order to save but one sinner, and it required no more to save the whole. "He, that is Christ, rendered to the authority of the holy law, those honors which Deity, only in union with human nature, could render." ‡ Those of this sentiment further argue, that, having obtained all that the law required, that is, "divine justice being fully satisfied" by the death of Christ, God will save those, and those only, whom it was his eternal purpose to save; and it is his eternal purpose to save the elect—while he does the non-elect no injustice; for both elect and non-elect deserve eternal punishment! §

* Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism

† It is not suggested, however, that the writers of this statement represent the Deity as being implacable, in so many words, but on the other hand "infinitely placable;" but it is left to the candid reader to judge, if there be some sinners concerning whom the justice of God will never be satisfied, whether he is not implacable; and if justice be satisfied it can require no more.

‡ Smith's Letters, p 33

§ What is said about *penitence* and *impenitence*, makes no difference in this argument, as it is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance; and the sentiment alluded to above, warmly advocates "the doctrine of particular election, and the doctrine of the special influences of the spirit of God in regeneration." Adams' View of Religions—See *Hopkinsians*, p. 134.

Others have supposed, "That Jesus Christ, by his death and suffering, made an atonement for the sins of the elect only, and has absolutely *purchased* grace, holiness, and all spiritual blessings for his people;" that is, for the elect; "that he did not die for all, and all for whom he died will certainly be saved."*

Others have supposed, "That Jesus Christ by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular; that, however, none but those who believe in him can be a partaker of their divine benefit. That is, the death of Christ put all men in a capacity of being justified, upon condition of their faith, repentance, and sincere obedience to the laws of the new covenant—that those, however, who are united to Christ by faith, may fall from their faith, and forfeit finally their state of grace."†

Others have supposed, that Christ by his death and sufferings "made complete satisfaction for the sins of the elect—that by God's laying our iniquities upon Christ, he became as completely sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as Christ—that the new covenant is not made properly with us, but with Christ for us; and this covenant is all of promise, having no conditions for us to perform; for faith, repentance, and obedience are not conditions on our part, but Christ's; and he repented, believed and obeyed for us—and to inflict punishment once upon the surety, and again upon the believer, is contrary to the justice of God, as well as derogatory to the satisfaction of Christ."‡

Not materially differing from the last mentioned sect, only in the extent of the satisfaction, are those who have been represented, and perhaps justly, as holding, "That Christ as Mediator, was so united to mankind, that his actions were theirs, his obedience and sufferings theirs; and consequently, he has as fully restored the whole human race to the divine favor, as if all had obeyed and suffered in their own persons." For "Christ obeyed the law and underwent the penalty," and "his condition and state are ours."§

But notwithstanding the difference in the several systems of faith above mentioned, not only respecting the death and sufferings of Christ, but in many other respects, yet they all seem to have agreed in this one particular, that is, that the death and sufferings of Christ were inflicted as the *penalty*, or *substituted* as the *penalty* of the divine law; and therefore his death was

*Ibid—see Calvinists, p 86, 87. †Ibid—see Arminians, p 44, 45, 46.
‡Ibid—see Antinomians, p 46. §Ibid—see Universalists, p 293

necessary to restore mankind to the *divine favor*, or "to satisfy divine justice"; which presupposes a time when man was not in the favor of God, or when divine justice was dissatisfied! :

The objection against this idea lays in the immutability of God. See Mal. iii. 6. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." If God be unchangeable, the idea that he has become any more propitious, any more merciful, possessing any more love or clemency towards man, in consequence of the death and sufferings of Christ, (or from any other cause) or that mankind, or any part of them, are any more in the favor of God now, or ever will be, than what they eternally have been, ever since they were created in his own image, is wholly unfounded. How would it have been possible for God to have "commended" his love towards us by the death of Christ, if his death were necessary to produce or procure the love of God to sinners? And if God loved sinners to that degree that he did not withhold his own Son, "but delivered him up for us all,"* it may be asked with propriety, how much better will God love those sinners after they shall have become *saints*? And if God have no love to sinners until after they are regenerated and born again, and if regeneration be produced by the "special influences of the Spirit of God, and if there be some that never will be thus regenerated, how was the death of Christ a "commendation" of the love of God to them? "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins."† If we cannot conceive of any greater love than that which was manifested in the gift of the Son of God, then certainly his death was not necessary to "purchase grace, holiness, and all spiritual blessings for his people," or in other words, to "restore" man to the "divine favor," because man was already in the *grace* or *favor* of God, (which is the same thing) and the gift of God in his son Jesus Christ, is in evidence of favor. And as we have no scripture evidence that *divine justice* was ever *dissatisfied*, nor can we conceive how justice could be satisfied by the *sufferings* of *innocence*, as a *penalty* which was due only to the *guilty*, and as the holy scriptures do not impute sin to Christ, or any where consider him in the character of a sinner, so we cannot see how the sufferings of Christ could "satisfy divine justice."

But perhaps the reader begins to grow impatient for a positive answer to the question. Then observe, The gift of God

in Christ Jesus, and the ~~some~~ ^{some} ~~working~~ ^{working} works of his ministry, even to the laying down of his life, were necessary to commend the love of God to sinners; and the sufferings and death of Christ were *consequent* upon his being sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh." * and his coming into a sinful world. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:" † "But God, commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." ‡

Having given this answer, it will now be incumbent on us to show how it may be said that Christ suffered the just for the unjust, or died for us, the ungodly, unless he suffered a *penalty* justly due to us for our transgressions. And, to be sure, if there be no way in which one person may be said to suffer for another, unless he suffer in the character of a criminal, or as a surety, or in some sense or other suffer a punishment which is justly due to the person for whom he suffers, we may meet with some difficulty in explaining this subject; but if it may be said of a man with propriety, that he suffers for another, or for others, although he does not suffer in the character, or in the sense above mentioned, then we shall meet with no difficulty in reconciling all the scripture testimony upon this subject with the answer above given; that is, that all the sufferings, and even the death of Christ, in the light of suffering, was consequent upon his coming into a sinful world; and it pleased the Father to send him into the world to *commend*, or *manifest* his love to the human race. "For God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son, &c." §

It will require but little attention to discover that one man may with propriety be said to suffer for others, although to gain some glorious object, he voluntarily put himself into the place of suffering. This is always the case when one man freely offers himself, or engages in a service, in the behalf of others, that occasions him painful labors, or brings on himself the envy and reproach of an ungrateful public. As, for an example: Did not the ILLUSTRIOUS WASHINGTON, the *political saviour* of his country, voluntarily suffer, and expose himself to every hazard and danger for America? And will any body pretend that he suffered as a *criminal*, or that he suffered a *penalty* justly due to others? No! Although he was "num-

* Rom. viii, 3
iii, 16

† St John, xv. 13

‡ Rom. v. 8, 6

§ St John,

bered with the transgressors," or with the rebellious, by those who were inimical to the independence, or political salvation, which he achieved, yet his name will ever be dear to every true American. Yes, and it may be said, in a certain sense, "he suffered the just for the unjust;" for he suffered as much for those of his countrymen who at heart were inimical to him, and secretly strove to thwart all his plans, being citizens of the United States, as he did for those who were workers together with him in the glorious cause; and the Independence of the United States was finally gained as much for those who were inimical to American liberty, being citizens, as it was for himself. All this suffering was for us, the sons of freedom and liberty, for his country, and in many respects for this *quias*! And if there had been a traitor, like Arnold; or if there had been a Judas in his own family, it is possible he might have been massacred or suffered an ignominious death, as the leader of rebellion. But even had this also been the case, it might have been truly said that he suffered and died for us; or if he had been slain in the field of battle, his name would have been enrolled with WARREN, MONTGOMERY, and other American Heroes who bled for us. All this, so far as it goes, is directly in point.

Once more.—The following similitude coming nearer to the case under consideration, will throw further light upon the subject:

A father has a numerous family of children, all of whom, except their elder brother, have revolted from him, and have eaten of forbidden and poisonous fruit, which has so deranged the state of their minds that they have lost the true knowledge of their father, have formed very erroneous ideas of his character, have become alienated from his happy life through ignorance, not knowing their father's love and affection towards them, and are seeking happiness in the indulgence of their carnal appetites and passions. The father remains the same, and possesses every parental tie and feeling towards his children, notwithstanding their false notions respecting their father's character. He foresaw all the consequences of their disobedience, even before they revolted from him, and as they were not irreparable, he, for wise purposes, suffered them to revolt; knowing that he had a sure antidote within himself for this poisonous food, and by delivering them from their lapsed state, he should be able to make such displays of his love and goodness towards his children as would ever after establish them in a just and permanent faith respecting his character,

so that they never would again revolt from his precepts and government. All this he makes known to his only begotten son, (who had not gone astray) and after explaining to him the dangers and the hardships of the undertaking, constituted him his sole agent to communicate the *bread of life* to his lapsed brethren ; the *bread of life* being the only antidote to the *knowledge of good and evil*, the poisonous fruit of which, through disobedience, they had eaten. The *first-born* voluntarily undertakes the arduous work of doing his father's will. He went, and after passing through many sorrows, enduring many scenes of suffering, which were the fruits of depraved minds, he came off victorious, and brought home his wandering brethren, as trophies of his victory, to his father's house.

In all this it is very easy to discover the nature of the sufferings of the first-born, or what would be a proper application to be made of them in this case. Did he receive stripes? they were in consequence of the ignorance, prejudices, malice and envy of his guilty brethren. And although they were healed *directly* by the *bread of life*, yet they were healed, *indirectly*, by, or through those stripes.

Is not the American Independence often spoken of as costing much *blood*?—as being achieved by the *blood* of our fathers and brethren ; meaning the blood of the slain and wounded in the field of battle? But who ever supposed that the blood of our bravest men, when spilt, had any more efficacy than water spilt on the ground? None! Nor did even the unparalleled sufferings of the American army, although they were almost beyond description, have any more effect, in an abstract point of view, towards gaining our independence ; for every one knows that every officer and soldier that fell, instead of strengthening, weakened the American forces ; and so with the other sufferings. Yet those sufferings were immediately connected with that power, which, under God, performed the glorious deed.

So in the other similitude : It was the *bread of life*, which was communicated through the agency of the first-born, and not his sufferings, that effected the deliverance of his brethren. The bread of life restored them from all the evil effects of the poisonous fruit. His sufferings, abstractedly considered, did them no good ; neither ought we to view them as a *penalty* inflicted by the father in consequence of the disobedience of his other children ; but his sufferings all come from a different source ; that is, from the envy and ingratitude of his guilty

brethren. Yet his sufferings were immediately connected with, and held a conspicuous place in the arduous work.

By recurring to the scriptures, it will be clearly seen that the above similitudes are directly to the point in question.

Christ is the "first born of every creature," the "head of every man," the "only begotten of the father," who went not astray. He came to do the will of HIM that sent him, to *seek* and to *save* that which was lost. He is the "bread of God" which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. But the *bread* which he gives he declares to be his *flesh*, and his "*blood* is drink indeed." Yet Christ himself adds, "It is the spirit that quickeneth : the *flesh* profiteth nothing : the *words* that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."* Hence it is evident that it is that divine instruction which proceeded from the lips of Jesus, and not his death, which alone is able to quicken into life a soul that is dead in trespasses and sins. How is it conceivable that the literal flesh or blood of Jesus should have any more efficacy to put away sin, than the flesh or blood of the sacrifices under the law? And the apostle saith "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin."†

It will be readily granted that Christ, as an offering, was the great antitype, in whom all the types under the law concentrated, and in this sense we may consider his death as the closing and most solemn scene of the legal dispensation ; but still all that pertained to his body, literally, as an offering or sacrifice, is nothing more than what pertains to the *letter* that *killeth* ;"‡ that is, as it respects an expiation made by his death and sufferings, body or blood. We are not insensible that the apostle saith, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin ;"§ but it is believed that a careful attention to this subject will convince any rational unprejudiced mind, that whenever the blood of Christ is spoken of as cleansing from sin, it is used figuratively : it means the "blood of the everlasting covenant ;"¶ that is, the life and strength of that covenant.

Christ, in a spiritual sense, is the covenant of God to his people ; and as blood, in a natural sense, is the life and strength of the animal, so the blood of Christ, in a spiritual sense, is the life and strength of the covenant of God. See Isaiah xlii. 6, 7. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of

* St. John vi, 33, 51, 55, 63
§ I. John, i, 7. ¶ Heb. xii, 20.

† Heb. x, 4.

‡ II. Cor. iii, 6.

the people, for a light of the Gentiles ; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." This covenant contains every spiritual blessing wherewith the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love."* For therein is immortality and eternal life brought to light through the gospel of the Son of God.

It is not our present design to attempt an elucidation of God's holy and gracious covenant, but if our present views of the subject are correct, then it is evident that the death and sufferings of Christ, in themselves considered, have all that relation or connexion with our salvation, according to the magnitude of the object, as the *fatigue* and *sweat* of a man who voluntarily labors in the field to procure bread for his children, have with the *life* and *health* of his children. In the *first* place, the life of his children is the gift of God : *Secondly*, That life is prolonged, and rendered comfortable and happy by the means of the labor in the field : *Thirdly*, Fatigue and sweat are the natural effects of labor. Thus God said to Adam, "In the *sweat* of thy face shalt thou eat bread ;"† meaning that he should be obliged to till the ground to procure that necessary article. So in the other case ; Our *existence* is the gift of God. *Secondly*, That existence is rendered happy by the grace of God given us in him who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption ;‡ and to bring us to the knowledge of this grace was Christ's errand into the world. *Thirdly*, His sufferings and death were the natural consequences, considering the state that mankind were in, of his coming into the world on such an errand. Hence it may be said that we are healed by his stripes in the same sense that Adam ate bread in, or by the sweat of his face.

There is another circumstance respecting the death of Christ which ought not to pass unnoticed ; that is, as it respects the magnitude of his sufferings. This is a subject upon which but very little has appeared in print. It has been generally understood, however, by those who consider the violation of the obligations of the *creature* to love and obey God, infinitely criminal, that the holy and righteous law of God incurred an infinite penalty, and of course demanded an infinite punishment, or required an infinite sacrifice as a substitute, none of

* Eph. i, 3, 4. † Gen. iii, 19. ‡ I. Cor. i, 30.

which could be abated ; hence it has been believed that the sufferings of Christ were equal in magnitude to the infinite, or *endless* misery of all those who will finally be saved by the merits of that all-sufficient sacrifice. It is no more than reasonable to suppose that the advocates of this system have ever discovered some difficulty on this subject ; hence there seems to have been a studied reserve as to expressing it in plain and positive terms. For but very few have ever been willing to state, in so many words, that God did absolutely die ! or even suffer ! and, short of this idea, it has been difficult to see how there could have been an infinite sacrifice, or an infinite suffering in the death of Christ ; for if Deity himself did not suffer, then the suffering was no more than human ; and even if all human nature suffered in him, the suffering being short, was very far from being *infinite*. This point, therefore, has rather been attempted to be supported by implication and allusions, than by any positive proof. We frequently meet with "Our dying God," "Our bleeding God," "Maker died," &c. in hymns composed for public devotion, alluding to the death of Christ, but in connection with such other words, that nothing short of the Deity could be meant. This undoubtedly has been supposed to be necessary in order to keep up the idea of an infinite sacrifice ; as it is very evident that the sufferings of Christ were but very short, as to time. But should we be disposed to admit the possibility of the incomprehensible idea of an *infinite suffering* in a few hours ! it may be asked what is gained by it ? We cannot conceive of a greater suffering than *infinite* ; and if Christ endured such a scene of suffering, has there been any less suffering in the system of God in consequence of the sufferings of Christ ? Is it not most reasonable to suppose that the same being who could look with infinite complacency on the sufferings of Christ, admitting them to be equal to what the *endless misery* of all the saved of the Lord would have been, had it not been for those sufferings, could have looked with equal complacency on the endless misery of all mankind ? What glory will it reflect on the Divine character to say that a part, or even all of mankind, are emancipated from endless misery by an adequate suffering in him "who knew no sin ?" And if the justice of God could accept of a suffering in any degree less than the endless misery of all those which strict justice requires, even on the ground of a *penalty*, is it necessary to suppose that the sufferings of Christ were any greater than what the sufferings of any other man, in the same circumstances would have

been ? For if justice could accept of a less suffering than infinite, why must it have had a greater suffering than what Christ as a man, apparently suffered ?

These are serious questions, which the reader is requested duly to weigh, and candidly to consider ; and after having paid that attention to the subject which the importance of it merits, it is presumed that every serious reflecting mind must be satisfied that the death and sufferings of Christ, in a literal sense, ought not to be considered expiatory ; neither ought they to be considered as a suffering inflicted by a penal law ; but, (in relation to the Divine economy) as an offering or sacrifice under the first covenant, and thereby closing the legal dispensation ; and so far as they respect Christ as an individual, his sufferings came from a wicked world as the baneful effects of superstitious ignorance. The sacrifice, or death of Christ, as an offering, contained the sum of all the offerings under the Levitical priesthood, which was offered up once in the end of the world, or age, that is, in the end of the legal dispensation, *judicially* to put away sin, and was a proper induction of our *great high priest* into the gospel dispensation. And as he offered up his *body* on the cross, as a closing sacrifice under the law, so he "gave himself" in his public ministry, "a ransom for all to be testified in due time."* In this offering of *himself*, he is the *life* and *spirit* of the covenant which God made with Abraham ; in which covenant all the families of the earth are blessed with *justification* through *faith*.† He is the true *light* that lighteth every man that cometh into the world ;‡ and having been made perfect as the captain of our salvation, through suffering,§ he will finally, by the influences of his grace and teachings of his spirit, bring all mankind to the knowledge of the truth as it is in the everlasting covenant of God, whom to know is life eternal.

* 1 Tim. II, 6.
11, 10.

† Gal. III, 8.

‡ St. John I, 9.

§ Heb.

Amos Kneeland

LETTER TO A METHODIST MINISTER,*DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,*

As he whom the Son maketh free is free indeed, there remains no occasion for any other bondage than that which is imposed by charity, which is the bond of perfectness. This being our freedom, whatever charity dictates we may not hesitate to do, and wherever charity would lead, we may not hesitate to go. The differences in particular tenets imbibed by those who are called of God, ever ought to be kept in subjection to the power of that love which alone distinguishes the disciples of the divine master; for it is evident, beyond all dispute, that those differences have arisen, not from the **CLEARNESS**, but the **OBSCURITY** of mental vision. Therefore, whoever withholds fellowship from his fellow servant on account of those differences, must be more under the influence of a carnal, than a spiritual mind.

In conformity to the above considerations, I have introduced this epistle with a design to discharge what I feel to be my duty, towards one whom I am willing to own as a brother in the faith once delivered to the saints, and a fellow-laborer in the ministry of reconciliation.

Although the design of this communication is to present to your mind a more scriptural view of a certain passage of scripture, than it appears to me you at present have, I wish not to communicate an idea that I am able to give you any general information in the scriptures, or that you stand in half the need of instruction that your fellow-servant does.

If I should be so happy as to succeed, as I am well persuaded I shall, in my present undertaking, I hope you will consider me in some measure as deserving a return which may be profitable to me, as I hope my labors, by the blessing of God, may be made to you.

In your Sermon last Thursday evening from 2d. Cor. this clause of the 5th verse, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith," you had occasion to speak of the same apostle's words to the Heb. xi. 1. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

This faith you suggested was a realizing belief of the gospel, or a real gospel belief in one who experiences the knowledge of the truth. I do not pretend to use your words verbatim, but the sense, I have no doubt, I am correct in. Now what I wish to bring to your view is, that the word faith in the

passage quoted from Heb. means something very distinct from that exercise of the human mind which takes cognizance of a fact through the medium of evidence, which exercise is our faith, or belief of a real or a supposed fact.

In the first place, permit me to state the several subjects which must exist as prerequisites of a true gospel faith or belief of Christ.

Secondly, I will endeavor to show that the faith spoken of in Heb. is not the result of those prerequisites. And,

Thirdly, I will attempt an illustration of the passage in Heb. by the help of other scriptures.

1st. As prerequisites of a faith or belief in Christ, as in all other things where belief is well founded, the thing to be believed must exist, and that independent of our believing it.

2d. The thing to be believed must lie so far hid from us, as not to be comprehended among those things of which we have a positive knowledge, as we have of those tangible objects with which we are familiar.

3d. Suitable evidences or witnesses of the fact to be believed must have a proper action, as witnesses, on the mind. When these circumstances all exist, a belief in the thing thus witnessed to the mind, is the effect.

Secondly. I am to show that the faith spoken of in Heb. is not the result of those prerequisites. This faith is the **SUBSTANCE** of things hoped for, the **EVIDENCE** of things not seen. In the case of our believing, the **THING** believed is one thing; the **EVIDENCE** by which we believe is another thing; and our belief, which is a consequence arising from the two former, is another thing. But the faith in our text is both the **SUBSTANCE** and the **EVIDENCE**, in and by which we believe and hope for things unseen. And as our belief can never justly be said to be either the thing in which we believe, or the evidence by which we believe, so our belief, let it be ever so real, true or efficacious as to its spiritual virtue, can never be justly said to be the faith of which St. Paul spake in Heb. xi. 1.

Thirdly, I am to attempt an illustration of the passage in Heb. by the help of other scriptures. One of the most plain passages which serves to set our text in its true scriptural light, is in Rom. iii. 3, &c. "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the **FAITH** of God without effect? God forbid." As the unbelief of man is exactly the reverse of belief, so it as fully renders his belief of no effect, as his belief makes his unbelief of no effect. But the **FAITH** of God is neither strengthened by our belief nor weakened by our un-

belief. And here it is necessary to observe, that God cannot be justly said to BELIEVE any thing, because he possesses no knowledge which comes to him through the medium of evidence ; therefore it is not proper to say that the faith of God is his belief.

By looking at the context of the quotation from Rom. we see that the *oracles* of God were what some did not believe, which ORACLES are the FAITH of God, which cannot be made without effect by the unbelief of those to whom those oracles were given. Those oracles are spoken of by St. Stephen in Acts vii. 38. "This is he that was in the Church in the wilderness, with the Angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers ; who received the lively ORACLES to give unto us." Again, by St. Paul to the Heb. v. 12 "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God ; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." Again, see 1. Peter, iv. 10, 11. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the ORACLES of God." Here it may be well to mention that the ORACLES of the first covenant were committed to the Jewish Church in the wilderness, which covenant was but a type of that which St. Paul spake in Heb. viii. 6, 7. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a *better covenant*, which was established upon *better promises*. For if that first *covenant* had been *faultless*, then should no place have been sought for the second." You will naturally discover that the *oracles* of God, the *manifold grace* of God, and the *better covenant* of which Jesus is the Mediator, are all the same thing in the passages above quoted, and are in fact the *faith* of God which the unbelief of the creature can never make without effect. This better covenant is the *substance* of the things for which we hope, and it contains all the evidence by which we believe.

Though this subject is of vast importance, and though it admits of a very extensive illustration by the help of the scriptures, yet I may justly suppose it to be made already sufficiently plain to the understanding of one who is studious in the scriptures. I will, however, add some observations explanatory of the word faith. The word in the Greek, (Heb. xi. 1) is *pistis*, and is the substantive from which the adjective *pistos* comes, which is rendered *faithful* in Heb. ii. 19, "Wherefore

in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and *faithful* high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Likewise see 2. Tim. ii. 13. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." Here the word rendered *faithful* is the same as in Heb. ii. 17, and comes from *pistis*, and agrees as above with the word in Heb. xi. 1, which is rendered *faith*. This last quotation is similar to that above quoted from Rom. iii. 3, where the word *faith* comes from *pistin*, corresponding with the other quotations.

You see, dear sir, I have been particular, though concise. I have shown from the text itself, that our *belief* cannot be what is meant by that *faith* which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; I have illustrated the text by the help of other scriptures; and I have shown that the word *faith*, as it comes from the Greek of those passages which I have quoted, signifies the covenant and faithfulness of God. This faithfulness is manifested in the covenant of promise, which saith, "In thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed." "He is faithful who hath promised."

By having a clear view of this subject, we see that the things contained in the everlasting covenant of God, ordered and in all things sure, are the eternal unseen things, which, though they are the proper subjects of our belief, yet our unbelief cannot make them without effect. For those things are not pursuant to our belief, but our belief is pursuant to those eternal truths and realities of God's love finally to be manifested in our salvation. Our belief of those divine realities, if established in our mind, by virtue of the three which bear witness on earth, the *spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*, brings heavenly things near to us, and we enjoy thereby an antipast of those things laid up for an innumerable multitude, who will finally be to the praise and glory of him who is our merciful and faithful high-priest.

I am, Dear Brother, yours in sincerity,

HOSEA BALLOU.

Rev. ASA KENT, Ministering to the
Methodist Society in Portsmouth.

REMARKS UPON A MISSIONARY'S REPORT.

In a Report of the Trustees of the *Massachusetts Missionary Society*, made at the Annual Meeting in Boston, May 29th, 1810, is found the following quotation from the Rev. John Sawyer's Journal of his labours upon the Kennebeck and Penobscot rivers:

"My labours were greatly lightened and made pleasant by the evident displays of distinguishing grace upon the people in Townships No. 3, and No. 4. It pleased God to awaken and hopefully convert some open despisers of his name; despisers of his word, people, and Sabbaths of God. There was the greatest solemnity I ever witnessed in any assemblies. There appeared a general conviction that God was present. Universalists were confounded—opposition was silenced; and a most pleasing stillness and solemn attention were conspicuous."

However unpleasant it may seem to the feelings of sensibility, it is nevertheless conceived to be the duty of those who are set for the defence of the gospel, faithfully to point out those injurious errors which tend to obscure the light of divine truth. The more particularly unpleasant the above task may be on account of the respectability of the learned gentlemen who are to be corrected by it, the greater is the necessity of faithfulness in the performance, and that on account of the influence which this respectability has on the public mind.

As charity forbids us to suppose that either the Rev. Mr. Sawyer or the learned Trustees would willingly misrepresent the sentiments of others, we are under the necessity of suggesting that they must be unacquainted with the most essential ideas in Universalism, one of which is, that the all-sufficient grace of God, manifested in Christ, is fully adequate for the conviction and conversion of the chief of sinners.

In the quotation above we find *open despisers of God's name; despisers of his word, people, and sabbaths of God*, made the subjects of *hopeful conversion*, which is perfectly consistent with the above essential idea in Universalism.

As all consistent Universalists believe in both the necessity and certainty of the conversion of such characters as above described, any manifestation of divine grace, effective in such a work, is so far from *confounding* a believer, it is sufficient to *confirm* and *establish* him, even if he were in *doubts* before.

Could those who stand in opposition to Universalism produce a single case in which divine grace had unsuccessfully exercised its utmost power for the conversion of sinners, it would

necessarily confound one of the most celebrated writers on the system, who ventured to say, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save Sinners, of whom I am chief."

ON THE INFLUENCE OF POPULARITY UPON RELIGIOUS OPINION.

Though reason, like natural light which it resembles, is an active and powerful principle, it has always been acknowledged by all philosophers, that many obstacles exist which for a time impede and obstruct the progress of truth. We have reference here to truth in general, the discovery of which is ever aided and accelerated by reason. The foregoing will readily be acknowledged a fact, at least as far as the observation applies to natural things, and to systems and theories that have a relation to mathematical or philosophical truth. In these cases, history proves that the mere ipse dixit of ignorant monks, priests and cardinals, has gone farther than the lucid demonstrations of the most profound enquirers into nature. But in religious affairs, most men are not prepared so readily to grant the propriety of these remarks. What is the cause? It is, that in divine and spiritual things, reason is commonly supposed to be out of the question; so far at least, that to her decisions no credit is to be attached. When this destructive error becomes popular; when great and respectable men openly avow such a doctrine; when their opinions are considered, as they necessarily must be in such a case, as the standard of orthodoxy, then popularity is enlisted on the side of error, and has a mighty influence upon religious opinion.

When a stupid and ignorant conclave denounced the doctrine of the earth's rotundity and revolution, the doctrine adverted to must of course be unpopular. Reason and demonstration were shut out, and every part of the noble theory which then presented for examination and belief, was made to bend to the clamors and denunciations of dull stupidity and enraged superstition. Thus circumstanced, had some man whose mind was otherwise active and susceptible of correct impressions, been made to hear the new doctrine, and to observe some experiments that demonstrated its truth, and was asked his opinion about it; he would have referred the enquirer to the late decision of the conclave against it, would have said, "trouble

me not with your new-fangled theories ; it is sufficient for me to believe as the church believes ;" perhaps without a moment's reflection upon the delight and satisfaction arising from "searching after knowledge," and "digging for wisdom as for hidden treasures," he would have further said, "if the new system be true, which is very unlikely, I shall derive all the benefit from it that you will who believe it ; the earth will maintain her roundity, and perform the revolution you ascribe to her, whether I believe it or not ; besides, I find such a faith is very unpopular."

The truth as it is in Jesus, has met with the same fate, more or less in every age, and for the same reasons. When Christ appeared upon earth, his doctrine was new, not in its principles, which are eternal, but in its manifestation. The leaders of the people at once knew, that if his doctrine were to gain ground, in the same proportion theirs must lose. What was to be done in such a crisis ? There was but one method to be taken, which was to improve the servile love of a popular system, which the people possessed, to their own exclusive advantage. Christ and his humble followers must be stigmatized. Ecclesiastical edicts must be issued, by virtue of which, if any confessed Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. The emissaries and officers of such men must be like their employers, and use every exertion to keep alive the spirit of the people. The Pharisees are not remiss in the important business. They ask with much earnestness, "have any of the rulers believed on him ?" And to answer their own and every other question, they conclude, "but this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed."

The same art which has been so effectually tried upon the members of Christ, to the exclusion of faith and profession, was once, though unsuccessfully, exerted upon the head of every man. The devil, having our Saviour upon an exceeding high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them ; and said unto him, all these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me. This account embraces much important matter. A few remarks upon it may be of use to guard us against temptation. Satan could not mean to insinuate that he was an object worthy of worship, nor does he give such an intimation. The drift of his pompous speech seems to be, that he valued but little what is known and believed, if so be he obtains the outward homage. For though it may be urged that the devil chooses to have his subjects totally in possession, both in faith and practice, yet

when he can do no better, he sometimes consents to a compromise ; and what is lost in one way, is more than gained in another. What he loses in the internal act of the mind, it being against him, he gains by an act of hypocrisy, when the mind will servilely follow where popularity leads, and thus oppose indirectly, the truth it believes. His language to Christ, and to all whom he tempts in this way, is, " You may believe what you please ; I shall not quarrel about that ; but why will you leave my worship for that of another, especially when attended with so many difficulties ? Have I not crowds of worshippers ? Whereas, observe my rival, surrounded with a despicable number, small when compared with mine. Then reflect upon the rewards I give, while on the other hand you get nothing but reproach and shame. I give my votaries the kingdoms of this world and their glory ; why, therefore, on such conditions, will you refuse me the outward homage which I require ? "

Nothing can exceed the effect which such insinuations have upon the weak and unwary, while the mind is led captive by Satan, at his will. The only means to extricate such out of the snare, is to impress upon the mind the worth and excellency of truth ; to arouse all the native powers of the soul to action and independency. In doing this, it is not sufficient merely to prove the value of truth with respect to things to come. No, her present worth must be exhibited, and men must be taught to appreciate it. We must know that her price is far above rubies. We must ascertain the satisfaction that arises from every active exertion to obtain the object, in which we always gain sufficient to reward present labor, and increase our hopes and brighten our expectations for the future. Then will the world and its empty parade, its gaudy trappings and ostentatious show, when brought into comparison with divine truth, in the love of it, appear as less than nothing and vanity.— Loosed from former bondage, the mind will soar above every subordinate object, exulting in the language of the poet,

" Heav'n is my home, and I must use my wings ;

Sublime above the globe my flight aspires :

I have a soul was made to pity kings,

And all their little glitt'ring things ;

I have a soul was made for infinite desires.

Loos'd from the earth, my heart is upward flown ;

Farewell, my friends, and all that once was mine :

Now should you fix my feet on Cæsar's throne,

Crown me, and call the world my own,

The gold that binds my brows could ne'er my soul confine."

SIR RICHARD STEELE'S LETTER TO THE POPE.

We shall occasionally occupy a few pages of this work with an interesting epistle from *Sir Richard Steele to Pope Clement XI.* This letter, which was written almost or quite a century ago, will shew our readers, in what light the writer viewed the popish doctrines and practices; while it will also be found that those absurdities, which in the view of most protestants, have disgraced the professors of the Romish faith, have not been wholly unknown, nor left unpractised in the protestant communion. The writer of this letter is severe, but his discipline is wholesome and salutary: he writes without reserve, but having exposed error, he gives the best advice, which is, to relinquish it. From the manner in which this learned gentleman makes his comparison between Popery and other religions, the reader will make the observation, that if Rome, be the "mother of harlots," an epithet which protestants have long given her, that she has many daughters, who greatly resemble their parent, and that Sir Richard Steele, with a happy facility has pointed out the family resemblance.

TO HIS HOLINESS CLEMENT XI.

Your Holiness will be surprised at so uncommon a thing as an Address of this nature, from one who is, in your account, and in the language of your Church, a Schismatic, Heretic and Infidel. But as I think it my duty to make this public restitution of the following *Treatise*, which was at first taken from your friends by force of arms; so, I will restore it fourfold, with all possible advantage to *you* and your *Church*.

I find that all the infallibility with which your Holiness is illuminated, doth not disdain the help of human information; and that your accounts of the religious, as well as civil state of this kingdom, are in a particular manner defective: And therefore I have resolved to act the part of a generous adversary, and without reserve to lay before you, out of the fullness of my heart, such things as will give you a juster information of the state we of these nations are in, than any of your predecessors in the Holy See ever enjoyed; and this, without any further ceremony, just in the order in which they shall arise in my own mind.

Your Holiness is not perhaps aware, how near the Churches of us Protestants have at length come to those privileges and perfections which you boast of as peculiar to your own. So

near, that many of the most quicksighted and sagacious persons have not been able to discover any other difference between us, as to the main principle of all doctrine, government, worship and discipline, but this one, viz. That you *cannot* err in any thing you determine, and we never *do* : That is, in other words, that you are infallible, and we always in the right. We cannot but esteem the advantage to be exceedingly on our side in this case, because we have all the benefits of *infallibility*, without the absurdity of pretending to it ; and without the uneasy task of maintaining a point so shocking to the understanding of mankind. And you must pardon us if we cannot help thinking it to be as great and as glorious a privilege in *us*, to be always in the right, without the pretence to infallibility, as it can be in *you*, to be always in the wrong, with it.

Thus, the Synod of Dort, (for whose unerring decisions public thanks to Almighty God are, every three years, offered up with the greatest solemnity, by the magistrates in that country ;) the Council of the Reformed in France ; the Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland ; and (if I may presume to name it) the Convocation of England, have been all found to have the very same unquestionable authority, which your Church claims solely upon the *infallibility* which resides in it ; and the people, to be under the very same strict obligation of obedience to their determinations, which with *you* is the consequence only of an absolute infallibility. The reason therefore, why we do not openly set up an *infallibility*, is because we can do without it. Authority results as well from power as from right ; and a majority of votes is as strong a foundation for it as *infallibility* itself. Councils that *may* err, never *do* : And besides, being composed of men whose peculiar business is to be in the right, it is very immodest for any private person to think them not so ; because this is to set up a private corrupted understanding, above a public uncorrupted judgment.

Thus it is in the North, as well as the South ; abroad, as well as at home. All maintain the exercise of the same authority in themselves ; which yet they know not how so much as to speak of, without ridicule, in others.

In England it stands thus. The Synod of Dort is of no weight : it determined many doctrines wrong. The Assembly of Scotland hath nothing of a true authority : and is very much out, in its scheme of doctrines, worship and government. But the Church of England is vested with all authority ; and justly challengeth all obedience.

If one crosses a river in the North, there it stands thus.—

The Church of England is not enough reformed; its doctrines, worship and government have too much of Antichristian Rome, in them. But the Kirk of Scotland hath a divine right, from its only head, *Jesus Christ*, to meet, and to enact what to it shall seem fit, for the good of his Church.

Thus, we left *you* for your enormous, unjustifiable claim to an unerring spirit; and have found out a way, unknown to your Holiness and your predecessors, of claiming all the rights that belong to infallibility, even whilst we disclaim and abjure the thing itself.

As for us of the Church of England, if we will believe many of its greatest advocates, we have Bishops in a succession as certainly uninterrupted from the Apostles, as your Church could communicate it to us. And upon this bottom, which makes us a true Church, we have a right to separate from *you*; but no persons living have any right to differ, or separate from *us*. And *they* again who differ from *us*, value themselves upon something or other, in which we are supposed defective; or upon being free from some superfluities which we enjoy; and think it hard that any will be still going further, and refine upon their scheme of worship and discipline.

Thus we have indeed left *you*; but we have fixed ourselves in your seat, and make no scruple to resemble you, in our defences of ourselves, and censures of others, whenever we think it proper.

We have all sufficiently felt the load of the two topicks of *Heresy* and *Schism*. We have been persecuted, hanged, burnt, massacred, (as your Holiness well knows) for *Hereticks* and *Schismatics*. But all this hath not made us sick of these two words. We can still throw them about us, and play them off upon others, as plentifully and as fiercely as they are dispensed to us from your quarter. It often puts me in mind; (your Holiness must allow me to be a little ludicrous if you admit me to your conversation) it often, I say, puts me in mind of a play which I have seen amongst some merry people: A man strikes his next neighbour with all his force; and he, instead of returning it to the man who gave it, communicates it with equal zeal and strength to another; and this to another; and so it circulates, till it returns perhaps to him who set the sport a-going. Thus your Holiness begins the attack. You call *us* hereticks and schismatics; and burn and destroy us as such: though God knows there is no more right any where to use hereticks or schismatics barbarously, than those who think and speak as their superiors bid them. But so it is, *You* thunder out

the sentence against *us*. We think it ill manners to give it *you* back again; but we throw it out upon the next brethren that come in our way; and they upon others: and so it goes round, till some perhaps have sense and courage enough, to throw it back upon those who first began the disturbance, by pretending to authority where there can be none.

We have not indeed now the power of burning hereticks, as our forefathers of the reformation had. The civil power hath taken away the *act*, which continued that glorious privilege to them, upon the remonstrance of several persons, that they could not sleep, whilst that act was awake. But then, every thing on this side death, still remains untouched, to us: We can molest, harrass, imprison, and ruin, any man who pretends to be wiser than his betters. And the more unspotted the man's character is, the more necessary we think it to take such crushing methods. Since the toleration hath been authorized in these nations, the legal zeal of men hath fallen the heavier upon hereticks; (for it must always, it seems, be exercised upon some sort of persons, or other;) and amongst these, chiefly upon such as differ from us in points, in which, above all others, a difference of opinion is most allowable: Such as are acknowledged to be very abstruse and unintelligible; and to have been in all ages thought of, and judged of, with the same difference and variety.

Sometimes *we* of the established church can manage a prosecution, (for I must not call it a persecution) ourselves, without calling any other help. But I must do the *dissenting protestants* the justice to say, that they have shewn themselves, upon occasion, very ready to assist us in so pious and christian a work, as bringing hereticks to their right mind: Being themselves but very lately come from experiencing the convincing and enlightening faculty, of a dungeon, or a fine. The difference between these two sorts of persons is this. The one differ from us about ceremonies of worship and government; but they boggle not at all at the doctrine settled for us by our first reformers: It is all with them right and good, just as Christ left it at first; and Calvin found it, above fifteen hundred years afterwards. The others, unhappy men, look upon this, to be straining at a gnat, and swallowing a Camel. However, the former sort having a toleration for their own way, upon subscribing all our doctrines, can the more easily come to persuade themselves, that the christian world is unhinged, if the latter should be tolerated in their opposition to doctrines which have been called fundamental, even by protestants, for so many years.

This hath been experienced particularly in Ireland; by *one* who could not see exactly what they saw, about the nature of Christ before his appearance in this world. For, as with *you*, a man had better blaspheme Almighty God, than not magnify the blessed Virgin; so, with many of us, it is more innocent, and less hazardous, to take from the glory of the Father, than of his Son. Nay, to bring down the father to a level with his own son, is a commendable work; and the applauded labour of many learned men of leisure: but to place the son below his own Father, in any degree of real perfection, this is an unpardonable error; so unpardonable, that all hands were united against that unhappy man. And he found at length, that he had much better have violated all God's commandments, than have interpreted some passages of Scripture differently from his brethren. The *nonconformists* accused him; the *conformists* condemned him; the *secular power* was called in; and the cause ended in an imprisonment, and a very great fine. Two methods of conviction, about which the gospel is silent!

In Scotland, let a man depart an inch from the confession of faith, and rule of worship, established by the assembly: and he will quickly find, that, as cold a country as it is, it will be too hot for him to live in. The Reformation boasts itself, *there*, to be Evangelical, without alloy; and is guarded by a very sensible severity of discipline. To suppose therefore, any point of doctrine to be erroneous, or so much as a subject for a new examination, in so unspotted a church, is a token of malignity and infidelity; and the man who doth it must be content to escape out of their hands as well as he can.

In England, it is not all the excellences in the world, united in one man, that can guard him against the fatal consequences of heresy, or differing, in some opinions, from the current notions of our world; especially if those opinions are such as are allowed to be mysterious and inexplicable. We have now an instance of one or two learned, and otherwise good men, who have thought it their duty, (as they themselves say) to step aside out of the common path. And what their fate will be, time must shew. At present, the zeal (as it is called) of their adversaries prevails. The fire is kindled, and how far it will consume, or where it will stop, God only knows. But the case of *one* of them (which will give your Holiness some notion how we stand affected) is very remarkable. For, not to mention his good life, (which is looked upon as a *trifle*, common to almost all modern hereticks;) tho' his religion is mix'd up with a good deal of kalendar and rubrical piety; though he hath his

stated fasts and feasts, which he observes with the greatest devotion ; though he is zealous for building of churches in the apostolical form of a ship, with all accommodations for order and decency ; though he is for the use of *oil*, and the *trine immersion* in *baptism*, and for *water* mixed with *wine*, in the *other sacrament* ; though he is very warm for believing in Christ towards the *east*, and renouncing the devil towards the *west* ; though he hath laid them a foundation for *independent church-power*, in the decrees of the Apostles themselves ; nay, though he joins with them in beating down human reason, when it would pretend to judge in matters of religion ; and resigns to them all the preferments in the land, from Dover, to Berwick upon Tweed ; yet all will not do : *He* holds the *son* to be *inferior* to the *father*, and *created* by *him*, though a being of most glorious perfections : and upon this account, *he* must not enjoy, even the poverty which he hath chose, in quiet. And if this be *his* case, what hath *another* to expect, who hath not these advantages on his side : though he should be found armed with unspotted integrity, and unequalled learning, and judgment.

Your Holiness will judge from hence, how the matter of *heresy* stands amongst us : and how it must stand, unless my Lords the Bishops, who have with an unexampled courage preserved our liberties in civil matters, with equal resolution step in ; and oppose that spirit, which from such beginnings at first among you, proceeded farther and farther, till it broke out into fire and massacre, for God's glory, and the good of his church.

And, as I observed before, that there was no need for your pretending to *infallibility* ; that it is better taken in the world, and as easy, to establish the same authority without it ; so, here it will be obvious to those of your church to observe, that there was no manner of necessity upon them, to discard the Scriptures, as a rule of faith open to all *Christians*, and to set up the *church* in distinction to them ; because they may see plainly now, that the same feats are to be performed, and with more decency, (though not with more consistency, of which few are judges) without carrying things to such an extremity. For, at the same time that we are warmly contending against *your* disputants, for the right of the people to search and consider the Gospel themselves, it is but taking care, in some other of our controversies, to fix it upon them that they must not abuse this right ; that they must not pretend to be wiser than their superiors ; that they must take care to understand

particular texts as the Church understands them ; and as their Guides, who have an *interpretative authority*, explain them.

This we find to be as effectual with many as taking the scriptures out of their hands. And because it is done in this gentleman-like manner, and gives them an opportunity of shewing their humility, it passeth very smoothly off : without their considering once the absurdity it leads to ; that (as Doctors differ, and Councils too) this method layeth a necessity upon two different men, nay upon the same man in different circumstances, to understand the same text in two different, and often in two contradictory senses.

And here again, with submission, I think we greatly surpass you in your conduct. For we have the same definite authority which you have, without the reproach of *depreciating* the word of God ; the people all the while being fully satisfied that we allow the *Scripture* to be their rule, and to lie open to them all. And we do indeed, in words, preserve all *authority* to the *Scripture* ; but with great *dexterity*, we substitute in fact our own *explanations*, and *doctrines* drawn from those *explanations*, instead of it.

And then, one great privilege we enjoy above you : that every particular pastor amongst us is vested with the *plenary authority* of an *Ambassador* from God ; very much different from the maxims of your Church.

For my own part, I have always been an advocate for all that reverence and regard which can with any justice be claimed by them ; and shall ever pay them all the respect which their character and conduct, compared together, can admit of. But the demands of those who talk loudest among them, seem to increase upon us every day. For, upon enquiry I find, what I was not before acquainted with, that what was spoken to the *Apostles*, was spoken to every one of them ; that it is a crime not to attend to them, even without excepting the case of self-contradiction, mutual contradiction, and (what is of much more importance) of contradiction to all the precepts of peace and love in the gospel ; that they are at length of an Angelick order ; nay, that to despise them, (not excepting any cases in which contempt is as natural as hunger or thirst) is, (if I may repeat it) to despise God himself. And all this, because fallible men, in whom the trust is reposed, have admitted them, according to the best of their judgment, to officiate in holy things.

Every one who thinks of himself in this light, needs no in-

fallibility or *impeccability*, to make him as great as ever your Holiness pretended to be. His character will do without those or any one other accomplishment.

These last four or five years, our *Pulpits* have in a particular manner *echoed* with the sound of *dignity*, *rule*, *pre-eminence*, and the like. There are indeed, among the best and most learned of our divines, who disclaim all this ; and disdain all respect but what results from the *sincerity* of their labors for the good of mankind. But the *noisy* make most *noise* every where ; and few care to *contradict* them.

This *privilege* I thought worth recording, in the account I am giving you of our *Religious affairs* ; because it is very *considerable* in itself, and seems to be of a *growing* nature. It is a *point*, which when once carried thoroughly and universally, will make every single *Presbyter*, or *Pastor*, an *absolute Pope* to his own congregation.

And this alone is sufficient to convince you, that at present, notwithstanding any intelligence you may have of their good inclinations towards you, they mean not *you*, but *themselves*. They may be surprised indeed, at last, to find it all end to *your advantage* ; but I acquit them of the guilt of any such *design* ; and indeed of any other *view*, but that of securing an immoderate *respect* to a particular *set* of themselves. Which I would not say, were it not too plain from hence, that let a *Presbyter*, or a *Bishop*, or even an *Archbishop*, differ from them in any matter of speculation or of State ; they have shewn the world, by their example, that all this pretended *veneration* is to be turned, whenever the *signal* is given, into personal contempt and ignominy. So that to say and unsay ; to do and undo ; to declare absolutely, that the *profoundest reverence* is due to the *Clergy*, and at the same time to raise a *storm* of *ill treatment* against any of their own body who displease them ; and all the while to keep their *countenances*, and look as if *all* was consistent ; is one signal *privilege*, which many amongst *us* have to boast of.

It is very true, what your Holiness may have been informed of ; that in many instances, both of *doctrine* and *ceremony*, we have been, of late years, rather drawing nearer to you, than departing farther from you.

It is a common maxim, and propagated very politicly by the *agents* of your Church, with the help of some of the *zealots* of ours ; *Better be a Papist, than a Presbyterian*. This being allowed by many *Churchmen*, and rightly managed amongst the *populace*, exceedingly diminishes the horror and aversion there

used to be in our people against the very name of *Popery*.— And this works by insensible degrees ; till many a man, who at first feels himself a hearty enemy to *Popery*, finding it to be allowed to be better than something else, of which he knows nothing, begins to think with more patience about it ; first, as not near so bad as it used to be represented ; and then as an innocent matter ; and then as a very tolerable *Religion* ; and at length as better than any thing set up against it : And all by the help of this general principle, rightly managed ; which takes off the edge of his former passion for the *Protestant Religion*, and so by degrees reconciles his thoughts to its contrary.

To the same purpose tends the revival of some matters of *doctrine* and *practice*, of your sort, amongst us. The power vested in *Priests* to *absolve* men from their sins, hath been declared by many, in such sort, as hath in effect made the will of God himself to be determined by their will, or even their humor. It may be summed up in these two points : “ That men can have no hopes of a *pardon* from God, but by *absolution* from the mouth of a *priest* ; and a *Priest* ordained to a nicety, according to a particular notion of *regularity* : And that God *must pardon* those whom a *Priest* pronounces to be *pardoned*. ” That is, that *they* are not so much obliged by the Almighty's will, as the Almighty is by *their's* ; and that God is never so much honored as when *weak* and *fallible* men are placed in his throne.

Some have changed this absurdity of an *authoritative absolution*, (which they see they cannot so easily defend) into an *authoritative intercession* of the *Priest*, who is now become with us, a *mediator* between God and man ; still securing to themselves the same power and privilege, in a less scandalous manner. This creates the same *dependence* of the Laity upon the *Priests* ; and shews again how *dextrous* we are in changing words, when there is occasion, without changing things at all.

But Your Holiness will easily guess the meaning of all this, when I let you know that the same persons declare, that *auricular confession*, and a particular *unburthening* the conscience of all its secrets, must precede this *great benefit*. And this, you well know, is an engine of unmeasurable influence, that can rule families, overturn states, and govern the world.

Add to this, another point greatly contended for of late, and very much to your advantage, in the issue ; that all *baptisms*, unless by *Episcopal priests*, in a *regular* line from you, are declared *invalid*, and of no effect to instate men into God's *Peculium*.

We have indeed openly declared against your doctrine of making the Sacraments depend upon the intention of the Priest: But we are doing a much worse thing, (if the doctrine of some men can prevail) and that is, making them depend upon what neither Priest nor Layman can ever come to any satisfaction about; viz. the Episcopal Ordination of the Priest, in a regular, uninterrupted line of succession from Christ himself. This indeed sweeps whole parishes away at once, which perhaps have had Preachers never ordained; and unpeoples the Christian world without mercy. But it is supposed it must make the poor distressed Laity adore the men who have this privilege, of entitling them to God's favor, or debarring them from it.

Yet with some it may be turned another way; and they may begin to ask, if the Clergy of our Church, which received all through the hands of the Romish, be vested with this glorious prerogative; how much more sure is it in that Church which communicated it to ours? If we are so positive, we had it from them, by whom we were ordained, and could not have it otherwise; how much more must it be in them, who ordained us?

After this, why should I mention, what must be known to you, the zeal of many for the multiplying of ceremoniousness and bowings, in public worship; for the Cathedral pronunciation of prayers; (which is the Protestant *unknown tongue*, to such as are not accustomed to it) our Altars, and the never-lighted candles upon them; the decorations of our Churches, which, you have experienced, never stop where the honest men who first begin them design they should; the consecration of our Church-Yards; and the like: In which you find this benefit; that several who take the impression of these things deep into them, are easily inclined, with a little art and management, to believe that Church must be the best which hath the greatest number of these good things.

We have not indeed many images or pictures left in our Churches, besides Moses and Aaron; whose figures, though they have nothing to do in our places of worship, give me the less concern, because Christians are in no danger of idolizing Jews.

(To be continued.)

POETIC DEPARTMENT.

LOVE DIVINE.

Nature through her works doth praise
Him who form'd this wondrous ball ;
Loud each part doth anthems raise,
To thy name—Great All in All !

Man alone can sleep supine,
Midst the marks of love divine.

Morning, clad in blue ey'd beams,
Wakes each songster on the spray ;
Man, for whom such goodness streams,
Man, more negligent than they,
On his pillow doth recline,
Careless about love divine.

While the Sun his daily round
Through empyreal tracts performs ;
Man, Nature's priest, akin is found
To dust—to insects—and to worms.
Man alone doth praise decline,
Favor'd child of love divine !

Mercy in a flowing tide
Waits to wash his guilt away ;
Jesus is his faithful guide,
Calling, "Sinners, I'm the way—
The truth—the life—all that are mine
Shall taste the joys of love divine.

Hear him, mortals ! hark ! his voice
Bids your drowsy souls awake ;
Lo—he calls you to rejoice,
And of heav'nly bliss partake ;
Bids thee make him wholly thine :
Surely this is love divine.

Let the world forego its hold,
Quit its unsubstantial joys ;
Sell not mental peace for gold,
Never pant for childish toys.

When thy God—thy Saviour's thine, Google
Nothing equals love divine.

THE

GOSPEL VISITANT.

VOL. I.

FOR SEPTEMBER, 1811.

No. 2.

EXAMINATION OF MR. WORCESTER'S DISCOURSE.

A candid examination and Scriptural trial of a Sermon entitled
GOD A REWARDER—Delivered at the Tabernacle in Salem,
Lord's Day, Jan. 27, 1811—By SAMUEL WORCESTER, A.M.—
Text, Heb. xi 6—“*For he that cometh to God must believe that
he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek
him.*”

IN the following examination and trial, we propose, 1st.
That the examination shall consist in ascertaining the real
sentiments which the preacher meant to convey, and their
agreement or disagreement when compared together, and
2d. That the scriptural trial shall consist in faithfully
comparing the sentiments and ideas of the preacher with the
Scriptures of truth.

We enquire 1st. what the reward is, which the preacher
has described, which God will confer on those who diligent-
ly seek him. 2d, On what principle this reward is granted.

The answer to the first of these questions is found on the
preacher's 8th page, in the following words. “Moreover,
immortal life and glory, in his presence and kingdom, is the
reward which God has promised to the righteous.”

It is necessary here to mark the distinctions which the
preacher makes between this *reward* and the divine magni-
ficence of the God of mercy, in the dispensation of his grace,
wherein, for Christ's sake, he forgives iniquity and justifies
the ungodly. This distinction is found in his 6th page, in
the following words. “For Christ's sake indeed, their sins

are forgiven, and they are justified and restored to divine favor ; but we are now considering, distinctly, the reward which they are to receive, after being thus pardoned, justified and restored." It is evident from the above quotations, that the preacher does not consider either *forgiveness of sin*, *justification* by grace, or the *divine favor*, as any part of the reward which those are to receive who diligently seek God. Their reward is *immortal life* and *glory*, as above noticed from his 8th page.

2d. The principle on which this reward is granted we learn by examining the preacher on his 4th and 5th pages, where he says—"Reward often carries in it an acknowledgement of something due ; and implies that the receiver of it has merited, or earned, and on the score of justice, may demand, the good recompence. This, however, is not always the case. According to an acceptation of the term, neither unusual nor improper, the bestowment of any thing good, as a token of favor, is as really a reward, as the payment of a debt, or a compensation for service, in the exercise of justice. On the score of retributive justice, men, even the best of them, have no claim upon God for a recompence of reward. They are unprofitable servants ; they deserve from him nothing but evil ; and, if they receive good at his hands, it must be through the mediation of Christ, and only in the way of mere favour. Accordingly the scriptures are clear in making this distinction ; and most decisively teach us, that the reward of the righteous is to be reckoned, not of debt, but of grace." Here it is evident that the preacher means to be particular in the explanation of the principle, on which this reward is granted. He shows both the negative and the positive. This reward is not granted on the score of merit as something due, for the best men in the world deserve nothing from God but evil. Reward, the preacher says, may be the bestowment of *any thing good*, as a token of favour. This is the principle on which he plans this reward, referring to the scripture where we are informed of a reward, which is not reckoned of debt, but of grace.

The preacher is furthermore particular in showing, in a number of instances, that God delights in and regards with complacency those on whom he bestows those expressions of unmerited favor. See on page 6th—"Would it not, then, be palpably absurd to suppose, that God will confer a reward,

as an expression of his favor, upon those in whom he has no delight."

We will now look and see if the preacher be consistent with himself. He says, "the bestowment of any thing good, as a token of favor, is as really a reward, as the payment of a debt." And this is the principle on which he has placed the reward, as above shown. Let us ask, what does the preacher mean to call the *forgiveness of sin, justification, and a restoration to divine favor*? If in these blessings there be a bestowment of any unmerited good as a true token of favor, then, of course, it comes into the principle, defined by the preacher, on which this reward is bestowed. He surely does not mean that the sinner *merits forgiveness, justification and a restoration to divine favor*. Is there no good bestowed, as a token of favor, in God's forgiving the sinner for Christ's sake?—in his justifying the sinner for Christ's sake?—nor in his restoring the sinner to divine favor for Christ's sake? Not only in idea is the preacher inconsistent with himself, but even in the choice of words, it would seem that he was careful to make his contradictions as plain as possible. Observe—the bestowment of any thing good, as a token of FAVOR is the reward which he defines; and yet he does not allow the *forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, justification for Christ's sake, and a restoration to DIVINE FAVOR for Christ's sake, to be a token of FAVOR*! Look again—the preacher says, the best of men *deserve* from God nothing but evil, and if they receive good at his hands, it must be through the mediation of Christ, and only in the way of mere favor. Yet he dares not allow that forgiveness of sin through the mediation of Christ, justification through the mediation of Christ, or a restoration to the divine favor through the mediation of Christ, are tokens of FAVOR through this mediation! When this preacher is brought to see that all those favors above mentioned, are really unmerited favors bestowed on sinners through the mediation of Christ, and that they are in reality true tokens of that divine FAVOR which the father of our spirits entertains towards his alienated offspring, he will then see the propriety of placing them on the principle on which he has defined the reward mentioned in his text.

On his 5th page the preacher calls those who deserve nothing from God but evil, *righteous and truly pious*, and says that God regards them with complacency. On his 7th

page he says, "God's being a rewarder of the truly pious implies, that he will evidently make a visible and public distinction, between them and the wicked." Here the preacher will not allow that those who deserve nothing from God but evil, are wicked! There is to be a public and visible distinction, made between the wicked and those who deserve nothing from God but evil! This distinction the preacher illustrates by a number of scriptures, and in particular by a passage in Romans, where the Apostle declares that God will render unto every man according to his deeds. What do we ought to suppose the preacher to mean by quoting such a text? If God will render unto every man according to his deeds, what will those receive who deserve nothing but evil? Answer, nothing but evil. These are those whom the preacher calls righteous; between them and the wicked this public distinction is to be made! What are the wicked to receive, which will distinguish them thus visibly, from those who are to receive nothing but evil? Christian reader, this confusion does not grow from the pure word of divine revelation, but from the preacher's contradictory statements.

Notwithstanding the preacher is particular on his 4th and 5th pages to define the *reward*, mentioned in his text, to be a bestowment of favor, through the mediation of Christ, on those who deserve nothing but evil, by following him only to his 7th page we find him entirely off from such a principle, and wholly on that of merit. The following are his words; "The father of a family may have particular complacency, in such of his children as are more dutiful than the rest; the preceptor of a school may have particular complacency, in such of his pupils as acquit themselves well; the sovereign of a nation may have particular complacency, in the most loyal and deserving of his subjects; and yet, for certain reasons, neither of them may deem it proper, to make his particular complacency known. But should the father, the preceptor, and the sovereign, respectively confer rewards, in the several cases, a disposition to let their complacency be known would be decisively evinced. Nor less decisively is the same disposition implied, in God's being a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

On what principle does the preacher, in the above paragraph, establish the divine complacency and bestow rewards? Answer, he uses the father of a family, the preceptor of a

school and the sovereign of a nation as similitudes to represent God, who is, and is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him. He establishes the father's particular complacency in the greater dutifulness of some of his children, than was found in the rest, and on this principle he places the reward. He represents the preceptor's particular complacency to stand on the supposition that some of his scholars acquit themselves better than the rest, and he also places the reward on the same ground. He mentions the most loyal and deserving of the Sovereign's subjects as the objects of his particular complacency, and rewards them for their loyalty and faithfulness.

That the preacher really meant to be understood according to the representation made in the above paragraph, may be more fully seen by the following from his 8th page, where he again applies his similitude. "For should the father, the preceptor, or the sovereign, make no distinction, but confer on the bad the same favors which he confers upon the good, the very essence of reward would be utterly lost."

Why would the essence of reward be lost in the above case? Answer—Because those whose works deserved nothing but evil, would receive the same tokens of favor as those whose works were good. This is as direct a contradiction of the ground on which the preacher has placed the reward described on page 4th and 5th, as can be stated in words.

Should the sovereign of a nation, on due examination of all his subjects, find that the most loyal and faithful subject in all his dominions deserved nothing from him but evil; that hanging him in gibbets, with the association of all the circumstances which could contribute to aggravate his misery, which it were possible for the sovereign to employ, would be nothing more than what this subject justly deserved, what would the rest of his subjects deserve from him?

Nothing can be more evident than that the most disobedient, disloyal, and unfaithful subject of a sovereign, can deserve nothing worse than "nothing but evil." The reader may wish to know what the learned preacher was after, which led him to make such confusion and contradictions in his statements. Be patient, we shall see by and by; but first let us try his doctrine by the scriptures of divine truth.

If we find in the sacred scriptures evidence to show that

God does, in fact, exercise a love toward sinners, while in a sinful condition, of such a tenor as causes him to afford them any tokens of unmerited favor, we shall find him possessed of the complacency or delight in them, pursuant to which our preacher argues the reward noted in his text. And furthermore, if we find, according to scripture, that the forgiveness of sins, justification through Christ, and a restoration to the divine favor, really to imply all that is meant by *salvation*, or immortal life and glory, we shall see that the preacher has made, or endeavored to make, a distinction where there is none.

1st. We want to find proof that God loved sinners ; and 2d. we want to find proof that in giving to sinners a token of his love, God has made as high an expression of love as is spoken of in the sacred writings. See St. John, iii, 16, 17, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." 1st John, iv. 19. "Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Rom. v, 8. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

These scriptures sufficiently prove that God loved the world of mankind while in a state of sin, and that he sent his Son to die for the world of mankind as a token of his love to them. That the delivering of Christ to die for mankind is considered as a major token of the divine favor, we learn from Rom. viii, 32. "He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things." The plain argument of the apostle in this scripture, is, as God has loved us with a love which is stronger than death, and has, pursuant to that love, delivered up his own Son for us all, which is the richest token that could have been sent even from heaven itself, there is surely no other gift too great for him to bestow. Look now at the preacher's question on page 6th, before quoted, "Would it not, then, be palpably absurd to suppose that God will confer a reward, as an expression of his favor, upon those in whom he has no delight ?" We have just proved that the death of Christ for sinners, was a commendation of God's love to

them, which proves, according to the preacher's question, that God delights in them !

The preacher is willing to acknowledge that God loves his creatures, as his creatures, but the light in which he places this love is truly shocking, and one of the greatest examples of folly and madness which has ever fallen under our notice. See his 22d and 23d pages. " Yet it is affirmed God loves his creatures. Why ? Because they are *his* creatures. So does the vilest man on earth love his children, because they are his children ; so also does the most savage beast of the forest love her *offspring*, because they are his *offspring* ; and there is as much holiness, as much moral goodness, in the natural affection of wicked men for their children, or even of brutes for their offspring, as in the love, which, according to the deniers of future punishment, God has for his creatures." It may be well to notice here, that what the preacher means by *future punishment*, is an endless exclusion from the felicities of heaven, as may be seen on his 9th page, which we shall notice in another place. What do we ought to do with the above representation of love ? If God do not punish his offspring eternally, the preacher says there is more holiness in his love, than there is in the love of a brute !

The unavoidable and most favourable conclusion from the preacher's statements, is, that God exercises a holy love towards those whom he excludes from endless happiness, and an unholy love towards those whom he favours with eternal felicity ! This conclusion will evidently appear to the reader's understanding, if it be observed, that the preacher defines the reward in the text to mean *immortal life and glory*, granted to those who *deserve* from God *nothing but evil* : for surely if not to punish eternally any of God's offspring, proves his love to be unholy, it must be such as *deserve nothing but evil* from him.

2d. It will not be necessary to multiply much scripture to show that the forgiveness of sins, justification through Christ, and a restoration to divine favor, imply as much as the preacher has set up, as the reward mentioned in his text. See Eph. i, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. " In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence ; having made known unto us the

mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him: in whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." In this scripture is seen the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of God's grace, in which grace God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence.

It surely must be according to the riches of God's grace, that any of his offspring are privileged with immortal life; and it is according to the riches of his grace, that he forgives sins. The subject of justification is treated on particularly by St. Paul to the Rom. 5th chap. 18th verse—"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." That this life, to which all men are justified by the righteousness of Christ, is eternal life, is seen by the last verse of this chapter. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The divine favor is spoken of in Psalm xxx, 5. "In his favor is life." The preacher surely will not deny that this life is eternal life. Now from the foregoing scriptures is it not evident, that the forgiveness of sins, justification unto life, and a restoration to the favor of God, which is life, and the gift of eternal life, are all the same in the divine wisdom in which God hath abounded towards his creatures? If so, what is the conclusion? Answer—the preacher endeavored to make a distinction where there is none.

If the reader desires to know why the preacher should wish to make the above distinction, we observe, that should he allow the justifying of the sinner unto life, through Christ, to be the reward which is not reckoned of debt, but of grace, then this reward could not be granted to any but sinners, but he contends that if the wicked have it as well as the righteous, it destroys the very essence of reward.

Let us look of the scripture which speaks of the reward of grace. See Rom. iv, 4, 5. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to

him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." If believing that God will justify the ungodly, be counted for righteousness; what will the belief that God will not justify the ungodly, which the preacher contends for, be counted?

As the reader may be impatient to know what the preacher would be at, which obliges him to be so full of contradictions, it may be well to observe, that he is endeavoring to prosecute a quarrel against the *heel* of a doctrine from which the *head* of his carnal mind has received some deadly bruises. Or to speak without a metaphor, he is at war with the grace of God which bringeth salvation to *all men*! In order to get along with this opposition, he is endeavoring to find a plausible argument against the salvation of sinners, and as he cannot find any of the human race who are not sinners, his endeavours bring him into all these contradictions; for he cannot raise a single argument whereby the salvation of one son or daughter of Adam can be effected; without establishing data by which the whole human family may also be saved; nor can he suggest an argument to prove either the justice or the certainty of the endless misery of any, without having it applied to the whole posterity of Adam.

In this difficulty we find him all the way through his sermon. One argument on which the preacher puts much dependence for success, in maintaining the doctrine of endless punishment, is, that God regards with complacency the *righteous*, to whom he will confer the reward of eternal felicity. The moment we bring this argument to a trial by the scriptures, it is lost.

Who does the preacher mean by the righteous? See his answer on page 5th. "The righteous are they, who imperfect as they are, yet truly love and fear God. Reconciled to him by faith in the Redeemer, they walk humbly with him, they diligently seek him, cordially embrace his truth, and obediently observe his commands. All who are of this character are, in the scriptural sense, righteous, or truly pious." The righteous are again described on page 8th, as I have before noticed, in the following words: "For Christ's sake indeed, their sins are forgiven; and they are justified and restored to the divine favor." Now having gotten a description of the righteous as it respects their righteousness, let us ask how they become righteous? Answer, by

having their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, by being justified unto life for Christ's sake, and by being restored to the divine favour by faith, which is the gift of God. It is reasonable, and even necessary that the preacher be asked if all mankind would not be righteous in this scriptural sense, if God should forgive their sins for Christ's sake, justify them unto life for Christ's sake, and for Christ's sake restore them to the divine favor by faith, which is his gift? How is this question to be answered? Would the preacher be willing to suggest that there is such a radical difference in men, that some who are favored with all the above blessings, are still haters of God, and disobedient to his commands, and that others are lovers of God, and obedient to his commands? The plain case is this, the preacher wishes his hearers to leap over every thing which constitutes a man righteous in the scriptural sense, not noticing it as the gift of divine mercy, and by a sort of jumble, attribute the whole to creature goodness, then lest he be attacked for the notion of justification by works, declares positively that the best men on earth deserve from God nothing but evil. So we are landed exactly where we set out.

In the midst of such Egyptian darkness, let us introduce the heavenly light of divine revelation. What do the scriptures hold forth as the ground of our righteousness? Do they not say of Christ, that the name wherewith he shall be called is the Lord our righteousness? Do they not say that by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life? Is not the true gospel, faith a belief in him who justifies the ungodly? Are we not said to be justified freely by his grace?

But the preacher says, "Reward, indeed, necessarily implies distinction." But he has not proved the assertion; neither can it be maintained on either of the grounds of reward, as he has explained the word. If reward mean a compensation for services, then as the case might be, all might equally fulfill the task assigned them, in which case a distinction in the rewards would be inadmissible. Or, if reward mean what the preacher first pretended to confine himself to, namely, a bestowment of unmerited good, as a token of favour, even to those who deserved nothing but evil, a distinction in the rewards, in this case, would be equally inadmissible. We do not wonder that the preacher should make

the above assertion, because the fact is, he cannot do without it; and yet he cannot support it, nor make it agree with his own explanations of the word, so we find him as we have and shall find him.

The preacher bestows much labor to make it appear that God regards the righteous with complacency, with a design to infer from that, that God does not regard the wicked as he does the righteous, and therefore will not treat them with the same favours, and of course will not give unto the wicked the glorious gift of life and immortality which he is determined to bestow on the righteous.

We do not wish to inculcate an idea that there is not as great a difference in God's approbations of virtue and true piety, and his disapprobations of vice and irreligion, as there is between those opposite qualities, as exhibited in human characters; but we wish to be indulged in the query, whether there be in reality as much difference between those who profess the religion of the preacher, and sustain as good a moral character as professors in general do, and the most irreligious and immoral, as there is between the two states to which the preacher assigns them in the future and eternal world? It is not to be expected that the preacher will undertake to vindicate the affirmative of the above question. Yet he is laboring to show that in order to reward every man according to his works, they must be assigned to those *infinitely different* states in the eternal world! Is there an *infinite difference* in the characters of men in this *finite state*? If not, how is there to be an *infinite distinction* made in rewarding them according to their works? The preacher contends that the best of men deserve nothing from God but evil, yet wishes to insinuate that God cannot make the distinction in the eternal world which his moral government requires, unless he makes some of those who deserve nothing but evil, eternally happy, and others eternally miserable!

On his 11th page the preacher says, "Though the best of saints in this world are imperfect, yet for all that is holy in them, God regards them with complacency." Here the preacher defines so nicely as to bring his mistake to light. We will ask the preacher how these saints came by the holiness for which God regards them with complacency? He surely will not say that those saints have wrought this holiness for themselves, for which God thus regards them, for

if they did, they would do out something besides evil from him. . . He will then say, that all the holiness which they possess is the gift of divine mercy. . . What was their situation before God gave this holiness to them? . . . Answer—constitute of sinners. Did God love them in this state? If he did not, why did he give this holiness to them? Does he love this holiness any better than he did before he gave it to those sinners, or in a word does he love those sinners because he has done those gracious things for them? Or did he do those gracious things for them because he loved them? When the preacher can answer these questions correctly, he will learn to avoid those contradictions which appear in his present preaching. . . Would a father who hated his son be at the expense of educating and setting him up in the world, and then love him with complacency because he had an education, and was in business? . . . Or would a father be more likely to do these things for his son because he loved him in the first place? . . . What would the good people of this preacher's parish think of their reverend pastor, if he should tell all the parents that they had no rational or commendable love for their children, only in consequence of having fed them, clothed them, and educated them? . . . Could the most modest of them forbear correcting his error, by telling him that all which he assigned as the cause of his loving his children were only the effects of the love he had for them before he thus fed, clothed, and educated them? . . . It would not be very strange if some who think it no crime just to speak to their minister, should think it a duty to hint something like the above queries to him, on account of the sermon we are examining. . . What is the reason the preacher does not see the impropriety of supposing that God hates the works of his own hands, and is at enmity with his own rational offspring? . . . If this were the case, what sense or propriety would there be in all the plentiful scripture testimony, which goes to prove that God sent his Son to die for sinners, because he loved them?

With a design to establish his darling tenet of future never ending punishment, the preacher states on page 21 and 22, the following remarkable hypothesis: "The whole gospel evidently proceeds on the ground, that mankind in this world are on probation for retributions of reward and punishment in the world to come." . . . Corresponding with his

where in the above statement, he has the following query on page 16. "But is there any such distinction to be seen in this world? Does not one event happen to all; to the good, to the clean, and to the unclean?" Does not God "send rain upon the unjust as well as the just? Nay; if there is any observable difference, is it not rather in favor of the wicked?—so much so, indeed, that many of the righteous in different ages, besides Job, and David, and Jeremiah, have on this account been greatly perplexed," &c. The argument which the preacher wishes to support by the foregoing passages, is, that as the whole gospel scheme occupies nothing but future rewards and punishments, the reward of virtue is not in this world, nor the punishment of sin. That the preacher means eternal never-ending misery, by future punishment, may be seen on his 9th page, where he says, "If then, the immortal felicities of heaven are to be conferred upon the righteous, as their gracious reward; it follows of necessity, that from these felicities the wicked must be excluded." That the above statement respecting the gospel is totally erroneous, we proceed to prove by the divine testimony. 1st. Let it be clearly understood, that according to this statement, there are no blessings of the gospel conferred, either in this or the coming world, only according to the works of the creature in his probationary capacity and character. And 2dly. Compare with this idea the following scriptures. 2d Tim. i, 9, 10: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Reader, God grant you understanding to judge with candor, whether this life and immortality, which is thus brought to light through the gospel, which is the grace given unto us before the world began, in Christ Jesus, be given to us according to our works. Look carefully, and see if the text do not utterly forbid such an idea. Eph. ii, 4, &c. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us set together in heavenly places in

Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God! Not of works lest any man should boast." Here let us be particular. The Apostle speaks of GREAT LOVE wherewith God loved us. What was our situation, of which the Apostle makes mention, when God loved us with this GREAT LOVE? Answer, "DEAD IN SINS." Will the preacher say that this GREAT LOVE wherewith God loved us, even when we are dead in sins, has no more moral holiness in it than there is in the love of the vilest man on earth, toward his children? or even of the most savage beast toward her offspring? How depraved, how unsanctified; how ungrateful; how lost to all sense of the infinite love of God manifest to sinners, through a gracious mediator, must the heart be, from the abundance of which, the lips are thus defiled! ...

Who would undertake to make it appear, that the richness of the mercy, the greatness of the love, and the quickening of those who were dead in sins, together with Christ, of which the above text speaks so particularly, is all predicated on the works of the sinner; who is thus dead in sins, and depend on the issue of probationary services? St. Paul endeavors to confirm the Romans in the glorious truth, that by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the free gift had come upon all men unto justification of life; and that the belief that God would justify the ungodly, was counted for righteousness. It is evident, beyond all contradiction, that the Apostle's meaning in the above scriptures and in his writings, in general, was directly opposite to the above statement made by the preacher.

Let us, in the next place, look at the argument with which the preacher endeavors to support his notion of eternal never ending rewards and punishments. This argument supposes that neither the righteous nor the wicked are dealt with, in this world, according to their works; that there is not made that distinction, in the dealings of God with his creatures, in this life as there really is in their moral characters. So far from that, he thinks that the wicked are rather smiled upon, while the righteous receive frowns.

The preacher is so confident in his notion on this subject, that he has even declared the truth of it to be authorised by

the experience of sin in all ages. The following are his words on page 16, "surely, then, to pretend that the present is a state of retribution, or that the righteous receive their reward and the wicked their punishment in this world, in any such manner and degree, as to make it manifest, that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, is to go directly in the face of the *experience and observation* of all ages." In order to show the preacher to be utterly erroneous in his opinion expressed above, let us look at the economy of God with the house of Israel, pointed out in the 26th chapter of Leviticus. It is, perhaps, impossible to give a just and full representation of the subject of this chapter in fewer words than are there used, but for the sake of conciseness a few quotations only will be made. The reader is requested at the same time, to examine the whole chapter with attention. See verse 18, "And if ye will not yet for all this harken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins." See verse 21, "And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not harken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins." 24, "Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." 28, "Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury, and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins." The reader is referred to the text for an account of the particular punishments denounced against that people, which, while they are the most awful and dreadful which can be conceived of, as possible for a people to suffer in this world, not one of them relates to a future state in the eternal world.

The preacher will not deny that that people have been visited with all the plagues, punishments and chastisements which are denounced in the foregoing chapter, nor can he, with the least propriety, say that the punishments inflicted on that people for their sins, which God says is according to their sins, is not enough to astonish the most perverse of the wicked, with God's disapprobation of sin. See the 32d verse. "And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies, which dwell therein, shall be astonished at it." It is unnecessary to labour the argument to show that the dealings of God with the different nations, noticed in Scripture, are marked with a decided disapprobation of sin, and an approbation of righteousness.

• We know that a Prophet, of whom we have but little knowledge, complains something in the same manner as the preacher does, in the 76d Psalm ; after which, in the same Psalm, he confesseth himself to be ignorant and foolish, even as a beast ; a very proper confession for one to make, who is unwise enough to represent that the wicked, in this world, are better provided for than the righteous.

.. It is by no means uncommon for preachers, of all christian denominations, to warn their hearers against sin, and to urge, with great earnestness, the remarkable punishments inflicted on the Jews, as an example of what we ought to expect, if we are equally sinful. And in so doing they follow the worthy example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. See 1 Cor. x. 5—12. "But with many of them God was not well pleased ; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now, these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.—Neither be ye idolators, as were some of them : As it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornications, as some of them committed, and sell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now, all these things happened unto them for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." It seems not a little strange that a professed Christian preacher, who has the Bible for his guide, should endeavor to persuade his hearers to believe, that God does not punish sin, according to its demerit, in this world, where it is committed.

If it were necessary, it would be very easy to prove, on the other hand, that virtue is also amply rewarded in this state of being, according to its purity. But it seems unnecessary to labor this point, as men in general, and even pharisees, in these times, are loth to say in so many words, that God does not reward them according to the cleanness of their hands. However, as the preacher suggests that David was among those who thought they had some reason to complain, it may be well to produce his testimony to the

contrary ; and this will be particularly welcome as it clears the divine character from an uncharitable representation. See 2d Sam. xxii, 21. "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness ; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompenced me." 25. "Therefore the Lord hath recompenced me according to my righteousness ; according to my cleanness in his eyesight." Whoever will read and carefully examine the whole of this chapter, will see that no comment is necessary to show that David was fully satisfied with the marks of distinction which the rock of his salvation had made between him and his enemies.

Men of corrupt and envious minds, who have the vanity to believe themselves more righteous than their neighbours, forever feel wounded when they see that the heavens smile on their neighbours with shines & showers as well as on them, and they are under the necessity of gratifying their envy with promises of distinction in another world, where they will have the distinguishing favor of resting on beds of roses, while their malicious eyes will drink exquisite pleasure in seeing their fellow-creatures, even their own children, wrecked on sheets of scorching flames forever ! Such is the spirit and such the doctrine, with which the meek son of Mary, and the exalted Son of God, is dishonored in the world which he came to save. And this is the spirit, and this the deadly error, from which the divine light and heavenly love of his gospel, is revealed, to save transgressors.

The preacher on his 9th and 10th pages has introduced a number of passages of scripture, which he supposes go to prove that God will make an eternal distinction in the future world, between mankind, under the different denominations of righteous and wicked. These passages we will consider. The first passage quoted is from Psalm i, 5. "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." If this passage were spoken or written by the direction of the Holy Ghost, to show that mankind will remain eternally in a state of sin and opposition to God, then the preacher has quoted and applied it justly, but we proceed to show that this is not the case. The Holy Ghost in this Psalm shows in a beautiful and most rational light, the distinction between righteousness and sin, the eternal durability of the former, and the momentary existence of the latter. Speaking in the 1st and 2d verses, of the blessed

man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, &c. proceeds in the 3d and onward, to show the difference between this and the opposite character. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season : his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so : but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Mark the distinction. The righteous is represented by a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, bearing an unwithering leaf. The ungodly are represented by *chaff*, which the wind driveth away. A tree planted by a river of water, which produces its fruit in season, is in a situation to increase its species ; but *chaff* possesses no power to propagate itself, it is not a tree whose seed is in itself, and therefore is not a plant of God's planting, and according to the words of the Saviour, will be rooted up. Notice particularly, that the *way* of the righteous is known and acknowledged of God, but the *way* of the wicked shall perish. If the *way* of the wicked shall *perish*, will it remain in the coming world and to all eternity ?

When sinners are saved from their sins, by the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, then the *way* of the wicked will *perish*. Thus we see the scripture, with which the preacher wishes to support his notion of endless sin and unmerciful punishment, is directly against him. Nor was he more fortunate in his second choice of a passage. See Psalm xxxvii, 18, 20. "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright ; and their inheritance shall be forever.——But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs : they shall consume, into smoke shall they consume away." No question from this passage necessarily arises but the following. What will finally become of the enemies of the Lord ? That this question may be answered satisfactorily, we will look at some passages of scripture directly to the point. See Rom. v. 10. "For if, when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." xi, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. "As concerning the gospel, they are *enemies* for your sakes ; but as

touching the election, they are *beloved* for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Col. i, 21, 22. "And you that were some time alienated, and *enemies* in your minds by *wicked* works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight." These scriptures make it plain that the grace of the gospel, in its saving operations, converts God's *enemies* into *friends*, from *sin* to *righteousness*. And this is exactly the same truth as is thus spoken of the ministry of the word, committed to the apostles, "to wit, that God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses."

It may labour in some very honest mind, why the text should say, that the wicked shall perish? and why the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs? and why they shall consume away like smoke? Answer, the wickedness of the wicked being brought to an end, it may be justly said that the wicked have perished, or that they are destroyed, for in the character of the wicked they are no more. The fat of lambs being used for burnt offerings, where, on the altar of God it was consumed by fire, and went off in smoke; so the enemies of God must be purified by fire, even by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning.

If contrary to the above solution we say, that the enemies of God will remain his enemies to all eternity, in a permanent state of rebellion, we as fully disallow the truth of the text, in that it saith, they shall be *destroyed* and *consumed*, as we disallow their final reconciliation to God.

Likewise it ought to be noticed, that by wicked works we have *all* been *enemies* to God; then of course, if the preacher have done justice to the text under consideration, it consigns us all to never-ending misery, while he himself, like blind Sampson, fares the fate of the expiring Philistines.

The third passage which the preacher has quoted for proof of his main point, unavoidably destroys his general argument in all its branches. See Isaiah iii, 10, 11. "Say ye to the

righteous, that it shall be well with him ; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked ! it shall be ill with him ; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.”

With a view to show the preacher his error, we ask him if he do not find him-self under the necessity of acknowledging that he has been, if he be not now, **WICKED**? If he answer in the negative, we reply in the language of truth, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” If he answer in the affirmative, we ask whether he has received the “reward of his hands?” If the wicked must receive the reward of their hands, and if they cannot receive it in this world, then of course they must receive it in the world to come, where the preacher will as surely be punished as his doctrine is true ! And not only the preacher, but all those who are redeemed from sin by the blood of the everlasting covenant ; for they could not be redeemed from sin if they were not **WICKED**, and if they were wicked, and if they have not received the reward of their hands, nor can receive it in this world, they must in the world to come !

It is remarkable that the preacher should happen to avoid the verses preceding his quotation, which show that the evil reward of the wicked, as the fruit of their hands, is received in this world, where their sins are committed. See verse 8 and 9. “For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen ; because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory. The shew of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not ; woe unto their soul ! for they **HAVE REWARDED EVIL UNTO THEMSELVES.**” Here is the ruin of Jerusalem and the fall of Judah, which is the reward of the hands of the wicked, which they have rewarded unto themselves. There appears to be no more reason why the text under consideration should be applied to a future state of existence, than for applying it to a state of existence before we came into this.

The fourth passage which we find quoted for the purpose of proving that some of God's rational offspring will be punished unmercifully to all eternity, is found in Mal. iii, 16, 18. “For them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name, a book of remembrance was written before him. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day

when I make up my jewels ; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then ye shall return and discern between the righteous and the wicked ; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." If this scripture had said, that we should discern between those who are blessed with immortal life and glory in the eternal world, and those who are cursed with never ending unmerciful torments, it would have been to the preacher's purpose ; but as it alludes to no such thing, therefore it is no evidence of such an event.

If the reader will look at the foregoing passage in its connection, he will find that the prophet designed the text for a refutation of what the preacher endeavors to support by it. The preacher wishes to show that the wicked are happy in this world, and that the righteous are miserable, but that it will be different in the eternal world, &c. Now read the prophet. "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord : yet ye say, what have we spoken so much against thee ? Ye have said it is vain to serve God ; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts ? And now we call the proud happy : yea they that work wickedness are set up : yea they that tempt God are even delivered." Here is what a very religious people said, and it corresponds exactly with what the preacher says in his sermon, That religious people are accused, by the Holy One in the 9th verse of this chapter, of robbing him, and of being cursed in consequence of so doing.

The preacher's fifth text is in St. John v. 28, 29. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

On account of a general consent to an opinion of this text, which opinion has been long sanctioned by tradition, it is necessary to show particularly the error of applying it as it is usually applied. We shall show in the first place, that it is more reasonable to suppose that this text was spoken in a figurative sense, than the reverse.

See the 24th verse and onward. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not

come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."—The *dead* here meant, were those, undoubtedly, who heard the word of Christ, and believed on him who sent him, whereby they passed from *death* unto *life*. This *death* then does not appear to be the death of the body, but of a moral nature.

The *graves* therefore, mentioned in the 28th verse, ought not to be understood to be the literal tombs or sepulchres in which literal bodies, when literally dead, were laid, because it is not using the text judiciously to change it from a figurative to a literal mode of speaking. If the graves are not to be understood in a literal sense, the whole passage evidently alludes to what at that time was taking place, and what would immediately follow. The similarity of this text with one in Daniel, is such as renders it reasonable to suppose that the Saviour had his eye on the same subject as the prophet had. See Daniel xii, 2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Those who were asleep in the *dust of the earth*, spoken of by Daniel, mean the same, undoubtedly, as those who were in their *graves*, spoken of by Christ; and by coming forth to the resurrection of life, and damnation, in one text, means the same as awaking to everlasting life, and to shame and everlasting contempt, in the other. That these passages relate to the same time and event, will not be disputed, even by the preacher.

Let us next endeavor to determine the time to which the prophet Daniel alluded. In the 1st verse the prophet marks the time with a distinguishing circumstance, which renders our success in fixing this time satisfactory. "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." See also this very time noticed by Christ in such a way as to make it evident that he meant the same time which the prophet did. Mat. xxiv, 21. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." The case is now plain, if Christ and if Daniel meant to speak of never ending punishment in the eternal world,

would there be any sense in saying that there would not be such a time of trouble afterward? Those of whom Christ spake as being dead, and of whom Daniel spake as being asleep, are undoubtedly comprehended by St. Paul to the Ephesians, v. 14. "Wherefore he saith, awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Being in the *graves*, and in the *dust of the earth*, signify the insensible state of the Jews, resting in the rituals of the law, and those additional ordinances with which they made it void. From this stupor that nation was roused as with the voice of the Son of God, by the preaching of the gospel by the apostles, and by the dreadful calamities with which they were soon visited after the days of Christ. Then was there a dissolution of the Jewish hierarchy; the master of the house rose up and shut to the door, those who believed the gospel of Christ entered into the life thereof, thousands of others were destroyed by the Romans, and one of another, and the residue fell under the condemnation of choosing darkness rather than the light which God had sent them, and into the everlasting contempt in which that people have been through the ages since that time.

As a still further reason for understanding the time of which we have been speaking, as above set forth, the reader is desired to observe that the Saviour distinctly declared that all the things of which he spake in this communication to his disciples, in the 24th of Matthew, should take place in that generation. And not only is the reader requested to notice the above, but also, that the three parables in the 25th chapter, were a continuation of the same discourse which has its beginning in the 4th verse of the 24th chapter, and that that generation was the only time in which the whole was to be fulfilled. By duly observing these things, it evidently appears, that the sixth passage which the preacher quoted, is by him misapplied; as that passage is from this 25th of Matthew. This chapter begins with the word *THEN*, which refers to the time which he had before designated. Then follow three parables, which were evidently spoken to represent the things of which he spake in the 24th. The last paragraph, out of which the preacher quotes his proof of future never-ending punishment, begins thus, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," &c. See again Mat. xvi, 27, 28. "For the Son

of Man shall come in the glory of his father, with his angels ; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." By putting the words of our Saviour together, we learn to correct the vulgar opinion respecting those scriptures. As it is evident from what we have seen, that the judgment noticed in the 25th of Matthew, took place in the generation in which Christ lived on the earth, so it will appear reasonable to understand the everlasting punishment noticed in the last verse of this chapter, to be the same as the everlasting contempt spoken of by Daniel, as above noticed.

In the 26th of Lev, where the punishments of Israel are pointed out to be *according to their sins*, this punishment is called *chastisement*. See verse 28th—"Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury ; and I, even I, will CHASTISE you seven times for your sins." So also in the last verse of the 25th of Mat. the word rendered punishment, is *kolasin* in the Greek Testament, which is of the same signification, the true meaning of which is to make better.

The seventh passage quoted, is from Rom. ii, 5—7. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God ; who will render to every man according to his deeds : to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life ; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also the Gentile." By the views and sentiments exhibited by the use which the preacher has made of the above scripture, he appears to be exactly in the situation of a very worthy young man, of whom we have the following account in St. Mat. xix, beginning at the 16th verse. "And, behold, one came and said unto him, good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life ? And he said unto him, why callest thou me good ? there is none good but one, that is, God ; but if thou wilt enter into eternal life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which ? Jesus said, thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal,

thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother ; and, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, all these things have I kept from thy youth up : what lack I yet ? Jesus saith unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven ; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful ; for he had great possessions."

This young man expected to obtain eternal life by doing some good thing, and the Saviour answered his question according to its merit. If he were to obtain eternal life by his own works, it must be by keeping the law perfectly, without a single fault. And this is the sense in which St. Paul used his argument, where the scripture is found quoted by the preacher to prove that an eternal distinction will be made in the coming world, between those who are righteous and those who are wicked, in this life. To show that the apostle intended his argument for the purpose of destroying all ideas of a distinction in respect to justification unto life, we now proceed. But in this we shall depend, in some measure, on our reader's attention to the scripture in its connection, on this subject ; beginning the Epistle, and studying several chapters. However, we shall give a few extracts which may assist in making the subject plain. See verse 1st of the 2d chapter. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whomsoever thou art, that judgest : for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself ; for thou that judgest doest the same thing." Verse 3, "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God ?" Verse 6. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds." In what manner does the apostle inform us that God will render unto every man according to his deeds ? Answer, by granting to those who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life. As Christ told the young man, if thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments ; so the apostle evidently means, as he particularly shows in the 25th verse. "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law : but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation

and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

How many does the apostle pretend have come short of the GLORY mentioned in the 7th and 10th verses? How large a proportion of mankind does he believe have sinned? See his answer in the 9th verse of the 3d chapter. "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before PROVED both JEWS and GENTILES, that they are ALL UNDER SIN." Also, verses 23 and 24. "For ALL have SINNED, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," &c. With these quotations also consider the 19th and 20th verses. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them which are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

What is very remarkable is, that the preacher should not see himself and every body else cut off from any hope of justification pursuant to any probationary works of theirs, since the apostle asserts that the matter is proved that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight, and that wherein he judges another he condemns himself. And it is also equally remarkable that the preacher should not see that every soul who has sinned and come short of the glory of God, is freely justified by grace, as expressed in chap. iii, 23, 24, which we have noticed above. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," &c. To bring the apostle's argument to a single point, see two passages, one in the 2d chap. 10th verse, the other in the 3d chap. 12th verse. "But glory, honour and peace, to every man that worketh good." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Look on now to the 5th chap. 18th verse. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

It is now hoped, that enough has been said to satisfy the reader, that St. Paul was a stranger to the preacher's doctrine of this eternal distinction; according to the works of the creature;

The 8th passage which the Preacher has quoted for the purpose of proving that God will punish men eternally in the future world, is found in the 58th Psalm, part of the 11th verse. "Verily there is a reward for the righteous." To correct the preacher in the application of this text, we need only quote the whole verse: "So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." The preacher says, there is a reward for the righteous, but he denies that judgement takes place IN THE EARTH! And perhaps for that reason he did not quote the whole verse! The last passage brought in this assemblage for purposes aforesaid, is found in Job xxxi, 3. "Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?" This text we answer in the affirmative, but the passage says nothing about a future world, nor endless punishment.

We have now carefully examined the scriptures which the preacher thought were sufficient to prove the proposition for which he labours so zealously, and which seems to lie so near his heart, but we find none of those scriptures at all to his purpose. It is evident beyond all power of refutation, that the Holy Ghost never intended those scriptures to support the preacher's opinion of endless unmerciful punishment.

We seriously hope the preacher will not be disposed to call our reasoning on the foregoing scriptures, "quibbles and declamations," of which he speaks on his 21st page, unless he be disposed, at the same time, to prove such an assertion. This passage on his 21st page we will notice. Says the preacher, "We are not ignorant, indeed, of their quibbles and declamations upon this point; quibbles and declamations by which they delude the unwary, but which are completely refuted even by themselves. For while they talk of an atonement, and of being saved by the merits of the redeemer, they will also tell you that sinners are punished, as much as they deserve, in this world;" &c. As believers in God who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and as deniers of ENDLESS UNMERCIFUL PUNISHMENT, we do by no means assume the place of judgment, or

pretend to say how long God may, for gracious purposes, chasten or punish the rebellious. We believe that chastisement will be exercised by the faithfulness of our merciful father in heaven, as long as sin in us renders it necessary, and no longer. But let us look at what the preacher calls our quibbles and declamations. "For while they talk of an atonement, and of being saved by the merits of the redeemer, they will also tell you that sinners are punished as much as they deserve, in this world," &c. We presume that the preacher does not mean to be understood, that we say that all sinners are punished as much as they deserve in this world, because that would be saying what we could not prove by the word of God, and it would be saying what we presume the preacher would be loth to affirm that we do say. But we say by the authority of God's holy word, that God "will render unto every man according to his works." And yet we say by the authority of the same holy word, that all who have sinned and come short of the glory of God, are "justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Now if the preacher has called this *quibbling* and *declaiming*, it belongs to him to prove such an allegation against the word of God, or to acknowledge himself, and that with confusion of face, to be in the wrong.

Though we wish to close this examination and trial, we beg of our readers to have patience a little longer, there being a few things more worthy of notice. In his improvement, the preacher says, 1st. "The doctrine of future punishment is a fundamental article of true religion." With this first, we will place his fourth inference, in the following words. "A denial of future punishment is virtually a denial of the gospel." It is supposable that every body believes that all *punishment* is *future*, in relation to the crimes for which punishment is inflicted, but we have before proved that the preacher means eternal never ending punishment in the future world, by *future punishment*.

By placing these two inferences together, we learn that the preacher believes that the doctrine of FUTURE, NEVER-ENDING UNMERCIFUL PUNISHMENT, IS A FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. Now it is evident that a religion ought to be called according to its PRINCIPLE or FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLE of faith; of course, the gospel

which the preacher believes and preaches, is, and ought to be called, the GOSPEL of ETERNAL, NEVER-ENDING PUNISHMENT ! St. Paul has informed us that the gospel was preached to Abraham, and he is careful to tell us the words in which it was preached, and makes an application of the gospel in such a way, as, it would seem, difficult not to understand him. See Gal. iii, 8. "And the scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." With what blessing did God promise to bless all nations ? Answer, JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH. Here the gospel was preached by God himself, but our preacher's FUNDAMENTAL article was not mentioned !

The same apostle tells us again, see Rom. iv, 3. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." What did Abraham believe ? See the answer in verses 4, 5. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Here is a particular account of Abraham's faith, but we find in it no mention made of our preacher's *fundamental* article. St. Paul, in Acts xx, 24, calls the gospel, "The gospel of the GRACE of GOD." In Eph. i, 13, he calls it the "GOSPEL of SALVATION." vi, 15, he exhorts us to have our "feet shod with the preparation of the GOSPEL of PEACE." Col. i, 23, he speaks of the "HOPE of the GOSPEL." Can there be any sense in calling the doctrine of *endless unmerciful punishment*, "the gospel of the grace of God ?" When ministers have their feet shod with the preparation of their *fundamental doctrine* of eternal damnation, do they appear beautiful upon the mountains as the "feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publishes peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation." Who would be willing publicly to express their *hope* in this "*fundamental article*" ? With a design to support this *fundamental article*, the preacher says on his 20th page, pursuant to his second inference, "The grand declaration of the gospel is, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Here the preacher has made a mistake, which we will rectify. 1st. In this sentence, which the preacher calls, "the grand declaration of the gospel," is the thing to be believed, declared ? Answer, No.

2d. Is not the *gospel* the thing to be believed? Answer, Yes. What is the conclusion? Answer, the *gospel* is not declared in the sentence which the preacher quoted.

By paying that attention to the mission which our Saviour gave to his apostles, which every professed preacher ought to pay, we see as plain a distinction between the *gospel* and the above sentence, as there is between a fact, and the belief or disbelief of that fact; as plain a distinction as there is between good news, and belief or unbelief of that good news; as plain a distinction as there is between the justification of all men by the righteousness of Christ, unto eternal life, and men's believing or disbelieving in that justification. The Saviour commanded his apostles to go into all the world, and preach the *gospel* to every creature; but he never commanded them to publish in their preaching, what he told them would be the consequence of men's believing, or of disbelieving the *gospel*, in the room of preaching the *gospel* itself. But the preacher by the above mistake destroys his *fundamental article*, for it is plain that this *article* is not expressed in what he says is "the *grand declaration* of the *gospel*." Notice, "He that believeth shall be saved." In this part of the declaration it is shown that if the time ever comes when all men shall come to the knowledge of the truth, according to the will of God, expressed by St. Paul to Timothy, then all men will be saved according to the will of God expressed by St. Paul in the same communication. Therefore, it is evident that if all men believed the *gospel*, they would all be saved. In this case, what would become of this *fundamental article*? Here we find the preacher labouring in the absurdity of supposing, that the *fundamental article* of the *gospel* depends on the *gospel's* being disbelieved! Notice again, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Here is nothing said about endless damnation in another world. We should naturally expect to find the *fundamental article* of the *gospel* in the *grand declaration* of the *gospel*. How do the scriptures explain the meaning of the words, "He that believeth not shall be damned"? Answer, "He that believeth not IS CONDEMNED ALREADY, and the wrath of God abideth on him." This condemnation will abide as long as unbelief does, and no longer.

On his 26th page, the preacher, in endeavoring to show that the doctrine which he is at war with is more pernicious

than Deism, or Paganism, he says, "The Pagan believes that his God, or Gods, will reward the good and punish the bad."

It is evident that the preacher here means that the Pagan believes in his doctrine of endless punishment. Thus he conceives that the Pagans believe the *fundamental article* of the *gospel*! Why should the preacher disagree with the Pagans about non-essentials, as long as they agree in the *fundamental article of religion*? The ancient Carthagenians used to offer men sacrifices to Saturn, and in their supplications they put infants in the arms of his brazen image made hot for the purpose of consuming these victims of an offended God. Similar abominations were also practised by the nations bordering on Judea, and even among the Israelites, but never by the command of the God of Abraham, nor to his pleasure. How far an ingenious mind might trace the consistency of such *sacrifices*, with the preacher's *fundamental article*, we will not pretend to say, but we very well know that the Deity worshipped by the believers of this article, hold that infants must burn in a much *hotter place* than *Saturn's image*, to *all eternity*, to vindicate some sacred property of their God!

It appears that this *fundamental article* of the preacher's religion, is in some measure growing out of repute in his town, and the *Paganism* with which it seems to be connected, not so highly regarded as formerly, for which see the following lamentation, on his 28th page, "My brethren, is it not most deeply to be deplored, that this corrupt and pernicious religion has an establishment in this place; and is regarded with so little abhorrence, and so little concern? Is it not to be lamented, with the liveliest sensibilities, that so many of the unstable and the ignorant, the unwary and the young, are ensnared by its seductive allurements?" Here is expressed the true spirit of those who mourned the absence of their idol, spoken of by the Prophet Ezekiel. See his 8th chap. 13th and 14th verses. "He said also unto me, turn thou yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz" This weeping and lamenting the absence of an heathen idol, was by no means pleasing to God, nor is it likely that the preacher's lamentation for the lost repute of a *fundamental article* of

his *faith*, founded upon and supported by heathenish principles, is any more acceptable to that divine being, who has said, and has a right to say, "My glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to graven images."

After examining thus far, and finding so much in this sermon so very repugnant to both reason and revelation, one might suppose that all its errors had been noticed; but this is not the case: nor is it conceived that one half have been pointed out. However, it is believed, and that confidently, that enough has been done to convince any unprejudiced mind that the general scope of the sermon is as contrary to the gospel of the grace of God, as it is contradictory within itself. As we have shown, we presume, to the preacher's understanding, that the use he made of his text is contrary to its true sense, he, as well as our readers in general, have a right to ask what that reward is, of which the text speaks, and how and where the diligent seeker of God is to receive it? The answer to these questions is as easy as they are important. 1st. What is the reward which we expect to obtain by seeking after any nameable thing? Answer, the thing itself. 2d. When do we expect to have this reward? Answer, when we find that for which we diligently seek. 3d. What are the seekers, noticed in the text, in search of? Answer, God. When will the diligent seeker of God be rewarded? Answer, when he finds God. 4th. How can God be found? Answer, by the Son's revealing him. 5th. In what character is he revealed? Answer, in the character of a just God and a Saviour. 6th. Does not this reward imply eternal life? Yes, for to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, is life eternal. 7th. When is this life eternal received and enjoyed? Answer, when this knowledge is obtained.

Had the preacher taken such a course, as the foregoing, with his learning and good sense, especially if he could have felt the spirit of the subject, how charmingly must the truth have been communicated from his lips, how profitable must his sermon have been to the sheep of his charge! The abundance of scripture to support him would have beautified the discourse, and also have edified his hearers. How animatingly does the Psalmist speak on this subject in his 19th Psalm. Speaking of the law of the Lord, under the similitude of the sun from whose warmth nothing is hid, he says,

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." See again, Prov. xxiv, 13, 14. "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honey-comb which is sweet to thy taste: so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off." In the parable of the lost sheep, what did the shepherd leave the ninety and nine, and go into the wilderness after? Answer, the sheep which was lost. What was his reward? Answer, the sheep returned safely to the fold. The Saviour says, the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. What is his reward? "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

The thing sought for is the reward of the seeker. How unspeakably joyful is that soul made, who can say, "I have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." Great, said the Saviour to his disciples, is your reward in heaven. The preacher uses this passage on his 16th page thus: "Great is your reward." Where? Not on earth, but "in heaven." Where is that heaven which is the kingdom which Christ declared to be at hand, when here on earth? Where is that kingdom of heaven which Christ told the scribes, pharisees and hypocrites, that they shut up against men? Where is that kingdom of God which St. Paul says is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Let rejoicing angels give the answer. "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will toward men." The preacher adds, "It is not in this world, but in that which is to come, that God hath laid up for them that love him, what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived." That the preacher did great injustice to this text, may be fully seen by its connection. See 1st Cor. ii, 7, 8, 9, 10. "But we speak

the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." This scripture is as opposite to the use the preacher made of it, as any two propositions can be stated. He accuses those who endeavour to support the doctrine of Universal Salvation, on his 25th page, of making use of deception and false representations." This verifies one important scripture which has been used in this trial to correct one of the preacher's errors: "For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself."

We cannot but regret having an occasion to point out so many erroneous ideas in the preacher's Sermon, nor can we express our sorrow that he should devote those abilities which are worthy of a better cause, in persuading people to believe that the providence of God is more favorable to vice than to virtue in this world. Who will love virtue for the sake of being frowned upon by the providence of God? Or is the preacher so much deceived as to think that he loves God because he is afraid of eternal punishment? O deception, how many forms you wear! O hypocrisy, with how many false pretensions do you profess religion!

To let the world know the illiberality of his heart, the preacher states on his 29th page, as follows: "And before this right hand be given to such communion, may this right arm perish from its socket." It was said of our blessed Saviour, that *he* received sinners, and eat with them. Are we worse than sinners? Or is the preacher better than Christ? He imprudently makes no reserve, even if he were convinced of the truth of the doctrine with which he is at variance now, yet the dreadful imprecation is on him, if he give his right hand to a communion where his own conscience would lead him! We feel disposed to say to such an one, "friend, do thyself no harm." He must have said this inconsiderately; we sincerely hope that he may speedily feel that his folly is forgiven.

Our readers are requested to pay a careful attention to the reasoning in the foregoing examination, &c. Comparing the

scriptures with the observations, let nothing of partiality govern in those researches after true wisdom and knowledge, remembering the exhortation of the Saviour : "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

How do we participate?

ANSWER TO A QUESTION CONCERNING THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF PARTICIPATION AT THE LORD'S SUP- PER.

QUESTION—Whether it would be consistent with the order of our Churches, to give a general invitation to the Lord's supper, on our Communion days, even to those whose names are not enrolled among the members, provided their morals are generally good? And as we view the sacrament of the Lord's Supper a Gospel institution, would it be inconsistent with right views of that ordinance to admit little children, of sufficient age to attend public worship, to participate that emblem of a Saviour's love?

THE Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's death by symbols—a commemoration of his death as connected with his resurrection. It is wholly celebrative in its kind, as was the passover in the house of Israel, of the deliverance out of Egypt. By handling this ordinance we bring nothing to God for our acceptance; but remind ourselves of the manifestation of his grace in Christ Jesus. As we hold no change or elevation of the elements by "consecration," neither do we suppose any divine virtue to be infused into them and conveyed by them to us; but we use them as mere external symbols of a reality independent of them. And we use this ordinance to impress our own minds more particularly with the things signified by them, by meditation thereon. For the bread which we break in this ordinance, we consider as exhibiting the body of Christ, and expressive of the union subsisting between him and mankind his brethren, and feed upon him in our hearts, rejoicing in the grace given unto us in him by the Father before the world, by the purpose of his own will, prompted by his goodness of nature. And in Christ's death, this grace was manifested, ending and closing

forever the mortal state of suffering, and bringing life and immortality to light in his own person as the head of every man—as the resurrection and the life of all human nature. And the “cup of blessing,” which we drink, we regard as expressive of the communion of the blood of Christ, even the blood of relation—the life hid with Christ in God, which shall deliver us from the bondage of corruption, and translate us into the kingdom of celestial glory—into the liberty of the sons of God. We take this emblematic cup of salvation, and drink abundant consolation out of the thing signified thereby; and forget our poverty in the earthly state, and remember our misery no more. And as we view the Salvation of God to be a common salvation, unto which every knee shall bow, and which every tongue shall confess, we must suppose it orderly to invite all present on our communion days, who are believers in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, to sit down with us to the table of the Lord spread among us:—we think it right to bid them all welcome to this feast of love! concluding that no one who commemorates the saviour’s death—“discerning the Lord’s body,” will wantonly and habitually indulge in vicious and unworthy deeds, to bring a reproach upon their profession, and tribulation and anguish into their own hearts. And why should there be, to seriously disposed persons, any more barrier to the communion, than to hear the preaching of the gospel? As the gospel that we preach is a common good equally open for all, why should not the communion, which is the emblematic exhibition of the gospel, be accessible to “whosoever will?” Why should those who hope, and who rejoice in the hope of eternal life in a world to come, refuse to celebrate divine love upon earth together, because of some difference in opinion on lesser matters?

As to little children partaking of the sacrament, by the direction and instruction of their parents, as they go to meeting, before they chuse it, or request to be admitted, I cannot say that it is at present my opinion. I know that small and great in the house of Israel ate the passover in celebration of deliverance from bondage, and that we baptize infants. But in baptism the subject is passive; and thereby, the putting upon us the heavenly image in the immortal state, by the power of God, is represented, which we may confess confidence in for our infants, as well as for ourselves, by such an

emblem applied to them, as that which God shall give to every one personally by a new dispensation. But in the communion we act by eating and drinking, which expresses the choice and acquiescence of the mind, which requires discretion in a greater degree than children possess when they begin to go to meeting, which is when about three or four years old. But when a youth of maturer age, say no more than eight or nine years, requests to be admitted to the communion, and understands the ordinance to be a celebration of the love of Jesus Christ, I think he or she ought to be admitted and received with pleasure. And we confess, were this a practice among us, and measures of instruction adopted to bring it forward, I doubt not but that we should have a goodly number of young professors, of whom it might be said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

Thom. Wolfe

SIR RICHARD STEELE'S LETTER TO THE POPE.

(CONTINUED.)

But we have one very common, and very scandalous representation, in multitudes of our churches; which in my opinion comprehends all possible absurdities of that sort: and that is, of the Trinity in Unity, figured in a triangle, and generally inclosed in a circle over our altars; as it is in the pictures which are now become fashionable in our common-prayer-books. This is justly esteemed the most inexplicable and unintelligible mystery of our faith. And yet it is suffered by those who so esteem it, to be set forth, even to men's eyes, by a mathematical figure; which always supposeth the clearest and fullest ideas possible: and the Eternal Father of all things is represented to christians, as *one side of an equilateral triangle*. In this point, I am almost ready to give up the cause to you; and to own that all your crucifixes, and all the figures of your saints, (who were once men and women; and therefore representable) put together, have not any part of the monstrous absurdity of this single representation.

The preaching, as it is called, of our popular men, (upon

which we used to value ourselves exceedingly) is now come to that degree of offence, that in many places, persons of sense and seriousness stay at home out of piety, and absent themselves from our assemblies for fear of hearing. For the truth of what I affirm, I appeal to the intelligence sent you by the agents of your church amongst us, who have of late been seen to take notes from the mouths of some of our followed preachers. For my own part, I have imagined myself sometimes to be at the late negotiations at Utrecht, and to hear one of the French King's Plenipotentiaries setting forth the glorious and advantageous terms of peace which his master hath yielded to us : sometimes to be in the midst of commissioners of trade, hearing the terms of our commerce extolled to heaven ; sometimes at the funeral of a late Princess, and my ears filled with the sound of fulsome panegyrick ; sometimes in a cabal of malecontent Jacobites, disburthening all their spleen, as far as they dare, in invective, and satire, and insinuation, against the late revolution, and their present superiors ; sometimes in one of the meetings of some of our old rigid Separatists, inveighing against their Bishops ; sometimes in one of Your Holiness's Courts of Judicature, amidst the thunderings of wrath and damnation, denounced against all heretics and schismatics ; in a word, sometimes at the Bear-Garden, and sometimes at Bedlam : But at last, I have roused myself up, and found myself where I should least of all expect to hear, either such subjects or such language.

About the end of January, and the beginning of February, we are in a more than ordinary manner, called upon to knock one another on the head, because our forefathers, (and particularly the forefathers of many of our modern high church champions) happened to be great villains above sixty years ago. And this is thought an excellent topic to be insisted upon from generation to generation : nay, it is esteemed by many to be seasonable all the year round.

But there is another topic which seems to be in great repute again at this time ; and that is the danger of the poor Church : a danger, which constantly is seen to increase, in exact proportion as the hopes and interest of your Holiness's friends in these parts decrease. So that to know whether this subject be in fashion, no one need to enquire any thing but how it stands with the Roman Catholics in England :

whether they are pleased or displeased. Some advantage, I can assure you, your Church reaps from it; that it hath created a nauseous disgust in many of the best members of ours; and hath furnished some of our dissenters with this reason against uniting with us, *that they will never be of a church that is almost always in danger.*

One thing more I must here mention; that the Church, (I mean that part of the Churchmen I am speaking of) is now in full possession of the privilege of applying God's judgments to their neighbours: which our forefathers so justly condemned, and took such pains to ridicule, in the worst of our Separatists.

Thus, the death of our late Queen, is a judgment upon a nation unworthy of so much goodness; though some weak fanatics, on the other side, have shewed them how easy it is for any to interpret judgments in their own favor, by observing that she died the very day upon which the late Schism Act, designed (as they think) to rob them of a natural right, took place.

After King Charles II's restoration, the Fire which destroyed the whole city, immediately following the Plague, which consumed vast numbers of its inhabitants, furnished matter for this humor. How easy was it found to make these to be great judgments upon account of that very restoration! Now, the same impious humor, (which is the very essence of fanaticism, let it be in what church it will) can do with a thousand times smaller matters. A fire, not to be named with that; a mortality amongst our cattle, which all Europe hath felt much more grievously: these are not only declared to be God's judgments, (as without doubt they are) but it is sufficiently and plainly insinuated, that they are judgments (not for their own sins, their own private enormities, or public ingratitude to heaven for their security; for they never think of themselves in this view; but) for *something at Court which should not be there*: which all the world knows how to interpret.

Thus hath fanaticism its vicissitudes, like the other things of this world: sometimes reigning in the church, and sometimes out of it; sometimes against it, and sometimes for it. And thus is it come to pass amongst us, that preaching their own passions, and indignation, and resentment, under their

disappointed expectations, is called by too many, preaching the gospel, and delivering messages from Heaven.

Your Holiness must not judge from hence that this is universal. I can assure you we have some still amongst us who truly deserve the name of Preachers of the Gospel; some still left of whom the world is not worthy; and of whom the world seems to think itself not worthy: for those whom I have before described are the mighty men of popularity, that draw the affections and raise the passions of the multitude. This disadvantage however, they have, which Your Holiness's agents, (who help to move the machine) would do well to put them in mind of; that the times are changed; and that there is not now one at the helm, who will either support them in their exorbitances, or betray the administration into their hands.

I return now to other subjects.

One great privilege we acknowledge there is which you enjoy above us; that your material Churches, as soon as they are consecrated to the service of God, are exempt from all human power whatever. They become immediately the refuge of the worst part of mankind; they fling open their doors to robbers and murderers; and cut-throats and assassins feel their salutary influence, and find within their walls, safety from force or justice. In this manner, and in this sense, do you invite and receive sinners into the bosom of Christ's Church: and such a charm is there in that sacred ground, that no man can attack them in their asylum, without being destroyed by your thunder.

But then to set against this, we have some advantages of a like nature which you are not aware of.

I have known the time when the figure of a material Church cut out in pasteboard, placed upon a long stick so artfully that it might seem to totter, and represent the danger our poor Church is in; and carried with an awful air before a Reverend Dignitary at an election for Parliament-Men, hath been thought a sovereign remedy against its enemies, and of force enough to drive them headlong and spiritless out of the field. Nay, I have known the very word Church, or High Church, pronounced with a loud emphasis, and a proper accent, and repeated a due number of times; I have known it change the countenances and voices of a numberless crowd, into something fierce and horrid, more than what is

human ; blow up their hearts, and swell all their veins into a sort of phrenzy, (which they called zeal, because it felt hot) and have the very same operation exactly upon them, and push them upon the very same exploits, as if they had taken an excessive quantity of wine or opium. At the same time, I have known the same word, pronounced movingly and tenderly, with the eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, turn falshoods into truths ; a sinner into a saint ; and a disturber of the common peace into a tutelar Deity.

These are privileges which I think it worth your while to be acquainted with. But there is one more advantage I will not omit, because we seem to depend very much upon it, and have already received much good from it ; and you, as I am informed by travellers, have nothing like it. And that is, "That we never fail to remember our Church in all our cups ; to drink her health ; and to allow her prosperity a liberal share in all our merriments." Thus we sanctify our wine with our zeal for the church ; and the wine returns the civility, by keeping alive and increasing the warmth of our zeal.

This, many persons esteem to be a truer characteristic of a good churchman, than even the doctrine of passive obedience itself : because it is known that many other churches have espoused that doctrine ; but no other church in the world ever pretended to this practice but ours. No wonder if Your Holiness hears sometimes of disadvantages or disappointments in the affairs of your Church, when this custom hath been so much neglected, or discouraged amongst your people. And if the word Church, alone, hath been found to perform wonders, what may we not expect from it, when it is made a toast, and hath all the strength and warmth of generous wine added to it ?

It is very entertaining to observe how the Authority of the Church, the Articles of the Church, the Liturgy of the Church, the Homilies of the Church, shall all be urged by many of our loudest Churchmen, and pleaded against others ; whilst their force shall be disallowed, and totally neglected, in points disagreeable to themselves.

The Authority of the Church is the voice of God himself : But it is nothing to them, if they happen to have Bishops whom they dislike or suspect.

The Articles of the Church are irresistible arguments a-

gainst others ; but they beg leave to except two or three unnecessary ones, which border too much upon Calvin, or press too hard upon your Church.

The Public Service is, beyond all example, irreprehensible ; but then, care must be taken to interpret the plainest passages in it by the most obscure ; and particularly, that the expressions of scripture and ancient creeds, be faithfully understood in the sense of modern schoolmen.

And as for the Homilies, they are good or bad ; of undeniable authority or of none ; just as they themselves please. Those against rebellion, are particularly good against all tumults, and disorders, and treasons, but their own ; and are to be urged home against the men whom they dislike. But those against your idolatry and antichristianism, and against many of your doctrines, I assure Your Holiness, are of no account amongst the same men, but as the warm, over-hasty efforts of ignorant zeal, in the first reformes : not fit to be urged against any true Churchman, (any more than those of the Calvinistical strain,) since the time of Archbishop Laud.

And all this passes smoothly, with such as are under their direction ; though it be so plain, one would think, to the most ordinary capacity, that all such matters are fixed with equal infallibility ; that authority is the same when it is against them, as when it is for them ; and that either all points of human decision are settled, so as to admit of no dispute ; or that none are. There is no medium. And unless this be allowed, without any empty distinctions, where there is no difference, I believe, in time, no man of sense will be able to see any difference between your Popery, and that of many amongst us, but that ours is Protestant Popery, and yours is Popish Popery.

Learning hath been deservedly looked upon in polite countries, as the great support and ornament of human life and true religion. But the state in which it is now amongst us, is hardly to be described. It seems as if not only learning, but even curiosity itself, and all pretence to it, were vanishing from among us. Our education is, of late, framed to heat our young men into faction, rather than to animate them into learning ; and boys, as soon as they are taught any thing, are seen to be entered into violence, and prepared for all the impressions of a party.

Our Universities have been deservedly styled fountains of Literature. But I wish I could say there were not those in them who industriously poison those fountains, or who employ all their capacity and credit to make it become a more laudable character, to be a furious zealot, than a good governor or a hard student ; and more reputable learning, to be thoroughly versed in the half-sheets and pamphlets of party scandal, than in all the good sense of the best authors of antiquity. And I wish I had not occasion to add, that from hence it comes to pass in them, that sound learning, and good manners, and industry in promoting these, are often seen to expose a man to a series of discouragements, opposition, and ill-treatment : whilst party zeal shall recommend persons of whose tempers, or capacities, or morals, I shall say nothing, to all the regard and honor that can be shewed them.

Your Holiness need not indeed, much fear any prodigious advances farther, on our part, towards learning or truth : which, unless we have it already in our possession, may lie eternally at the *bottom of the well*, for all that we are likely to do, to draw it up ; no *buckets* being allowed to be let down for it, but what are *stamped* ; and no *ropes* to be used to let them down, but what are of just such a *measure* and *strength*. For by this means, how can it be, but that the capacities and application of the greatest souls must be exceedingly cramped and stinted, when the whole method of procedure is so exquisitely fitted not to enlarge the views and enquiries of men, but to determine the mind to one certain set of thoughts, already fixed to be truth ; and the tongue to one certain set of sounds, for their eternal defence and security ?

The Public Exercises are not indeed exactly what they were, when the bare word of Aristotle, or Aquinas, passed for truth, as currently as a Bank-note passes for money.— But the method they are in is still the same in quality, though not in quantity. For though we have discarded many particulars, yet we retain, in the whole, much the same forms and modes which you left with us at parting, for the better securing of what we have not discarded.

We dispute still in a constant round, as you, our predecessors, used to do, *De omni Ente, scibit, and non scibit*. We have still the same *Quoad hoc*, and *Non quoad hoc* ; the same *Quatenus*, and *Non quatenus*, which we inherited : and many other auxiliary words, of great importance to refresh

the disputants, and to keep a dispute going ; but of none at all, towards the discovering or recommending any one single truth to the world.

This method may be called the art of wrangling, as long as the moderator of the dispute is at leisure : and may well enough be supposed to be a game at learned racket. The question is the ball of contention : and he wins who shews himself able to keep up the ball longest. A syllogism strikes it to the respondent : and a negation, or a lucky distinction, returns it back to the opponent. And so it flies over the heads of those who have time to sit under it, till the judge of the game strikes it down with authority, into rest and silence.

This is the state of things with us, and that chiefly in cases in which all generations, and all men, are equally concerned. What is truth, is determined for us, and settled before we are born, by forefathers and superiors, in the ages of illuminated understandings, and unprejudiced judgments. And our learned education doth not so much as pretend to be designed for farther discoveries of truth, in the most important matters : but is all framed to teach us the art of defending that which is already found out and decreed to be truth, before our time ; and the great duty of being humbled into contentment with what is already provided for us ; and into an abhorrence of all vain thoughts, of improving the intellectual estate left us by our careful ancestors. The voice of authority is this ; *hitherto shalt thou come, and no further.*

After this manner is every thing in our schools of literature and theology, established within unmoveable limits. We have established questions, out of the number of which it is not allowed to wander. And this creates a round of established syllogisms, to carry on the attack, and established distinctions for the defence. From hence it comes to pass that even the youngest disputants are often heard, in their first public exercises, to debate about God's prescience, and future contingencies, in one fixed method of difficulties and solutions ; and with full as much learning, and as clear light, as is to be found amongst the labors of the weightiest of the scholastic writers themselves.

But the good effect is much more visible, and much more remarkable, in the Theological Schools, where the method is equally, in one uniform, unvaried course : and where, by

that means, it is, not quite so uncommon a thing as some persons wish it were, to hear St. Athanasius's, or St. Austin's word, go farther than an Apostle's ; and an idle distinction, or incomprehensible definition, of one of your schoolmen, decide a difficulty much more to satisfaction, than a plain, intelligible expression or affirmation of our Saviour's.

If it were in any degree better, either in the established universities of North Britain, or in our dissenting academies in the South, I would freely own it. But take my word for it, it is, of the two, rather worse. In the North, there being a temporal kingdom of Christ, as well as a spiritual one, settled by law ; ordination and preferments are by consequence rigidly and inseparably tied to one certain scheme of opinions : and this naturally determines the public education ; and makes the rising generation conscientiously avoid the least tendency to any design of being wiser than their forefathers.

And in the South, amongst our non-conformists, it is much the same. The same logics, and the same bodies of theology, (as they are called) descend from generation to generation. The same systems and syllogisms, definitions and distinctions, pass on current for Divinity : and Calvin and the Gospel go hand in hand ; as if there were not a hair's breadth to choose between them.

These may be exceptions ; but this is generally the case : and the more unlikely soon to be otherwise with them, upon two accounts ; first, because their toleration is founded upon their mighty boasts of adhering more strictly to the Doctrinal Articles of the Church, in the sense of the first reformers, than the Churchmen themselves ; the defence of which therefore, is pretty much left to them, to pride themselves in : And, secondly, because their very catechisms are systems of all the deep points, and common-places, and hard words in divinity ; by which means, their people being all systematical divines, keep them strictly to the received scheme, and raise very great clamours, and very little contributions, upon the least deviation from what they have hitherto valued themselves upon understanding better than their neighbours, and have been taught, from children, to embrace as the very essence and life of the gospel.

To this method of literature it is, that we owe (what is of the greatest service to your cause,) such a multitude of wri-

ters, on all sides ; who, when they come abroad into the world, defend the sublimest points by the bare repetition of words, to which (when they are pressed) they are not ashamed to own, that they have no such meaning as they fix to them, upon any other single occasion, in the whole compass of speaking : that is, *none at all*.

And to this it is that we owe, at length, the blessed discovery, and candid profession, that it is not fit that we should have any meaning to our words, when we speak about God, the Supreme Being, whom we are to worship, in spirit and truth. A profession which, if it doth not turn to Your Holiness's account, it is not their fault, who own it, amongst Protestants.

The three great impediments to any advances towards a Reformation in your Church, have been always found to be these ; a false learning ; a real ignorance ; and a system of preferments, fixed and tied down to a particular system of opinions, or words.

The two first often go together. There is often in the uneducated, a real ignorance, without a false learning : whereas, in the others, there cannot be a false learning, without a real ignorance. But, both put together, would have little effect against the nature of things, and the irresistible force of truth, without the last of the three. Were it not for that, you would quickly find, that the mask would drop from the face of things ; and the clouds, which false learning had wrapt about the most important points, would be dissipated, and leave truth, in its lovely simplicity, naked, and open to every honest eye.

But your security, you find, lies in the last. Whilst the Church, and the World, are so closely and vitally united, and the immense riches of your Archbishopricks, Bishopricks, Deaneries, Cannonries, Abbies, Monasteries, Cardinalships, and Popedom, are all confined to the worship of the Mass-Book, and to the creed and decrees of the Council of Trent : the sons of your church find little occasion for any such learning, as may tend to poverty ; but a great deal of comfort in another sort of it, which carries as big a sound amongst the vulgar, and turns to a much better account, as it brings along with it defence and riches both ; and serves to support those opinions, which support that Church which is endowed with those *riches*.

I do not mention this with a view to your affairs only ; but to remind you, that you have so much of this yourselves, and find so prodigious a benefit in it, that you have the less occasion to wonder at, or envy, the *something like it* amongst us Protestants.

Your Holiness needs not, I think, call in the assistance of your Infallibility, to judge, from all this put together, in what a condition we really are ; whilst, all the while, we are boasting of our glorious separation from you, and deafening the by-standers, and tiring ourselves, in our several ways, with loud cries about our own apostolical purity and perfection.

As far indeed as we are in practice separated from you, in what we ourselves condemn in your Church ; so far we may, consistently enough, boast. But as far as we are united to you in our practice, though irreconcilably separated in words, methinks, (to confess the truth) you have rather a handle of boasting against us, that we ourselves think fit to practise, in some instances and some degrees. what we profess so severely to cry out against in your Church.

I forget that Your Holiness hath the affairs of the world upon you. But I can't persuade myself to make any apology, when I consider it is your interest that I should go on in this odd, unusual way, of speaking truth.

I have freely laid before you, what may reasonably enough give you and your Cardinals a sensible pleasure. I have without reserve, shewed you many of the follies, weaknesses, unhappinesses, inconsistencies, and wickednesses of us Protestants. It is but just to ourselves, now, that I should change the scene a little, and take down your satisfaction a few degrees from that height, to which it may by this time be raised. I scorn to flatter you, any more than ourselves : and how should you know the true measures, either of your hopes or of your fears about Great Britain, if you be not truly informed of our advantages and happinesses, as well as of the contrary. Nor is it any thing more than what is reasonable, that I, who have in the former part of this address, made no scruple to give myself pain, in order to give your holiness pleasure, should now be permitted to give you pain, in order to give myself pleasure : especially, since I promise, that if any thing offers which it may be a satisfaction to you to know, I will without reserve intermix it, to mitigate the affliction.

: Know then, Holy Father ; and let the consue of Cardinals know ; and let all your whole Church know ; and let the Universal World, wheresoever your Missionaries are dispersed, know, that King GEORGE now wears the Crown of these Realms ; that the Elector of Brunswick-Lunenburg, is now King of Great-Britain ; that the Protestant branches of our Royal Family, have in him begun to take place ; that the limited succession, so hateful to your friends, is now not only in the dead letter of our laws, but in possession ; that he is come to our wishes, safe, and untouched by the dangers of land or sea ; that he is not only come, but is come attended by his Royal Son, from whom we engage to ourselves the imitation of his father's virtues, and the continuance of our happy state ; that he is surrounded with a numerous young family, who raise the delight and expectation of all who see them ; with that Princess at the head of them, who, if we may judge from her past unequalled conduct, seems destined and reserved by Heaven, for the true interest and glory of the Protestant cause : a cause, which (as far as the nature of human affairs gives leave) now promises her, in gratitude, one earthly crown, in recompence for that other which her great soul formerly sacrificed to it ; and assures her of a heavenly one hereafter, whatever becomes of the images of greatness in this state.

Forgive me that I repeat it ; King GEORGE now fills the Throne of Great Britain : and believe me, notwithstanding all the intelligence of your friends from hence, (who are ever writing only what themselves wish) believe me, I say, he hath no thoughts of leaving us. His heart and soul is with us : and he hath too much greatness of mind, to be moved either by the brutal insults or the base misrepresentations of his enemies, to any thing but what is great and becoming. He feels he hath the riches and the courage of the nation on his side. He sees himself surrounded by true friends, as well as patriots, at Court. The coolest heads and the warmest hearts, are in his service. And he is blessed with a first Parliament, whose affections and passions are his ; engaged in his cause ; and inflamed with a zeal for his glory and interest, which are one with their own happiness. And what hath he to fear, thus guarded without ; and possessed within of every thing that can recommend a Prince to the love of a people ?

I can only attempt to give you some faint idea of what he is, and what we enjoy.

"To see him, is to love him. Never was so much integrity, and so much constancy, and so much sweetness, composed together, and expressed in features. He hath the dignity of the Prince, tempered with the ease and affability of the gentleman. His religion is christian virtue, without bigotry. Justice and beneficence are all the arts of government, which he desires to know : and in these he excels, enough to make him the delight of mankind. The wisdom of integrity in the public administration, is now going to shew itself to the senses of the world, to be vastly superior to all the mean artifices of falshood and cunning ; and to diffuse its blessings to present and future generations.

If you would know whether this view of happiness be any thing more than imaginary ; ask his subjects in Germany, how he governed, when his will was his law ? Enquire, whether he did not then think himself bound to observe the great law of nature ? and, whether justice and beneficence were not the measure of his administration ? Or else, only ask them why they took leave of him, at parting, with floods of tears ? Why they followed him with the tokens of universal sorrow, and with all the signs of distress at such a separation ? And then judge, whether it would not be very unjust in us not to conclude, that he who hath been tried by arbitrary power, and governed with justice and goodness, when his will was the law of his government ; will now be determined by the same justice and goodness, to make our law his will ; and to carry our legal happiness to a height unknown in former ages ; and to place it if possible, out of the reach of all future danger ?

How could I dwell upon this subject, did I not fear it would be too troublesome to Your Holiness ?

In the midst of all this, I know you have comfortable stories sent you, of the difficulties and discouragements he meets with. I confess it. He hath great difficulties to encounter. But then he hath a great soul to combat them ; and an unshaken firmness of mind to go through them with glory.

I am not going to dissemble in this point. The agents for your Church, and those amongst us who constantly go hand in hand with them, have without mercy embarrassed the affairs of the nation. It requires a wisdom, an applica-

tion, a dexterity, a perseverance, almost more than human, to rectify so many disorders and confusions as have been introduced. All these, he comes prepared to exert, to save and establish us.

I confess many are the obstacles and discouragements he hath already experienced : the fierceness of a false religious zeal, kindled and fomented by your emissaries, into fury ; the madness of rabbles, incensed by those who can have no security but in confusion ; the invectives of some pulpits, insinuating the vilest falsehoods into the minds of the populace, and giving the lie in the face of the sun, to all former professions of a sincere good-will to his interest.

(To be continued.)

MR. BALLOU'S DISCOURSE AT MR. KNEELAND'S RE-INSTALLATION.

Sept. 5, 1811

Rev. 2, last clause of the 10th verse.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

AMONG the inestimable properties which render the Gospel of God our Saviour justly entitled to the highest possible consideration and confidence of rational beings, and a subject into which the Angels delight to enquire, FAITHFULNESS holds a conspicuous rank.

The Gospel derives this character from the nature of its author, and the relation of all moral beings to him. The gospel is a ministration of life from the very nature of God to moral beings, constituted in his image, the brightness of his glory. This ministration of life discovers the faithfulness of God in that he acts towards his creatures consistently with his nature, which is love, and consistently with the moral relation in which he has constituted his creatures to himself, which is such as love, directed by infinite wisdom, devised. That faithfulness which is consistent with the character of a father, and which ornaments as well as dignifies his preeminence, equally regards, on the other hand, the happiness of the child, and any deviation from the last object, is equally wide from the first. Thus we shall ever find the honour of God, as the father of his creatures,

and the highest happiness of his offspring, inseparably connected and manifested in the Gospel of eternal life.

The beginning of the creation of God, in whom it pleased the father that all fullness should dwell, who occupies, by the merciful appointment of our all wise creator, the high office of mediator between God and man, has obtained, among many other titles of honour and distinction, the name of **FAITHFUL**.

The faithfulness of Christ is seen in his having no will or work of his own, but attending to the will and work of his father, according to his words. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Again, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The will of the father, as testified by Jesus, admits of the loss of none of all the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth, who are given to Christ, but embraces their being raised up at the last day.

As co-workers with Christ, those whom he has called to the ministry of reconciliation, and chosen as vessels of honour to communicate the things of the kingdom to the many heirs of salvation, by the faithful discharge of their duty, obtain the high honour of being called **FAITHFUL**; as it is written, "And they that are **WITH HIM**, are **CALLED**, and **CHOSEN**, and **FAITHFUL**."

The first and the last, who was dead and is alive, ever having a watchful care over the ministry of his word, noticing the peculiar circumstances of his servant, the minister of the Church in Smyrna, directed the solitary lover of his cross to communicate this encouraging promise to this suffering Angel of his Church: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Not less numerous, nor less weighty, are the circumstances which require faithfulness in the ministry of divine grace in these last days of Antichrist, when the Church is coming up from the wilderness of error, than when encouragement was needed for the promotion of the gospel in the Churches of Asia.

The foregoing observations not only evince the propriety of the application and use of our text, on this solemn and joyful occasion, designed for the establishment of one, whom we consider as called, and chosen, and faithful, in the important work of the ministry, in this favoured section of the redeemer's heritage, but mark, with much precision, the evangelical path in which the doctrine of the text may be traced.

In further laboring this subject, arguments will be directed to the following particulars.

1st. An illustration of the importance of faithfulness in the work of the ministry, will be attempted ; and

2d. The promised reward, noticed in the text, considered.

1st. It is conceived that no higher consideration of the importance of faithfulness in the work of the ministry, can be urged, than that of the faithfulness of God, of which mention has been made. In this work of God's faithfulness, nothing was omitted which could render the scheme of the gospel more extensive or more sure in its benefits.

Could it be found in the plan of the Gospel, that our incorruptible inheritance rested on conditions at the disposal of any moral agency, at all subject to the imperfections of creature nature, the faithfulness of God would be out of the question. But blessed be God forever ! He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This is the record in the archives of heaven, "God hath GIVEN unto us eternal life ; and this life is in his Son." And here it is just to observe, that this gift of eternal life in Christ, to the world of mankind, was not pursuant to any act of the mediation of the Son ; but all acts of his mediation are pursuant to the establishment of that gift in him, as will be seen directly.

Corresponding with the vast and merciful designs of our heavenly father, above noticed, we find the promise of universal salvation in Christ, made to Abraham, the father of the faithful : on which promise the chief of the apostles made the following comments. "*The scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise ; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.*" What is the apostle's conclusion ? "*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering ; for he is faithful that promised.*"

2dly. The faithfulness of the captain of our salvation, in his process of mediation, ought to be noticed as a high consideration of the importance of faithfulness in the ministry of his grace.

The whole of this mediation, as has been noticed, is pursuant to the eternal purpose of God, purposed in himself, in the salvation of man: and not, as has been too generally taught and believed, the cause which induced our heavenly father to be thus merciful to his offspring. The unscriptural doctrine of God's being reconciled to his creatures thro' Christ, frequently expressed in supplicating the Deity to lift on us his *reconciled* countenance, while it is marked with the contradiction of changing an unchangeable being, supposes the infirmity to have existed in God, which the mediation of Christ was designed to cure in us. This infirmity is *alienation from the life of God, through the ignorance there is in us*. To remove this ignorance, destroy this alienation, and to reconcile the world to God; was the great object of the mediation of the Saviour. To this object, as a faithful and true witness, his labours of love, in preaching the word of the kingdom, in miracles of mercy, in suffering and death, in his resurrection from the dead, in his ascension into heaven, the descent of the holy ghost, and his abiding with his chosen ministers of peace unto the end of the world, were all directed.

If, contrary to this argument, it be contended that all those mediatorial acts were designed to placate the Deity towards man, it most surely supposes that the will to do this work originated in the mediator and not in the father. But Jesus says expressly, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." The will of the father, which Jesus came to do, is thus expressed: "*And this is the father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. For as the father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that*

which was lost. And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." For the accomplishment of this great work, all power in heaven and in earth was given to Christ.

Where is the unhallowed hand that would put forth a finger to point to a single item of all this vast work, and presumptuously say, it will fail at last? Will a lover of the cross say this? Will the called, the chosen, and the faithful, who are with Christ, say this? Let it rather be said, as it is written, "*He shall see of the travel of his soul and be satisfied.*" "Brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

3dly. As when our blessed Saviour was on earth, it was necessary to oppose all the moral virtues with all their divine energies, to the opposition which came, like an overflowing torrent, fed by a thousand streams, against the truth, so is the case at the present day. Then stood up, to oppose the gospel, the high priest, the doctors of the law, the Pharisees with their broad phylacteries, the ready Scribes, the Sadducees, with the whole ecclesiastical power of an apostatized Church. The vengeance of excommunication from the Synagogue awaited the unhappy victim of their religious zeal, who dared to confess Christ. And wherein does the present opposition differ from that, except in forms and names? The pride of popularity then swelled the unsanctified heart of the religious bigot, who thanked God he was not like other men; the religion of the day, like a loose garment, covered the extortionous worldling, and their painted sepulchres, full of dead men's bones, were revered as friends and ministers of God. And who will attempt to show wherein that popular religion which denies the scriptural doctrine of universal justification through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, in the present day, differs from the old doctrine of the Pharisee? The more opinionated those blind guides became in the vain notion that they were the peculiar favorites of heaven, the more they found it in their hearts to lavish the curses of the law, which they had made void by their traditions, on those whom they styled sinners. And surely it requires but little sagacity to discover the same abomination in antichristian opposition to the gospel now.

It has been suggested that the divine energies of all the moral virtues were necessarily put in operation, by Christ, against the enmity which persecuted the truth which he preached ; and surely the necessity of faithful exertion is no less in the days in which we live. If prayers, watchfulness, meekness, patience, vigilance in labour and painful sufferings, were the characteristics of the saviour's travel, labour and ministry, what reason can be given why a different way should be travelled by the ministers of his grace in the present age of the Church ? If, in reply, it be argued, that no civil authority can now be directed by ecclesiastics against the religion of the gospel, it is happily granted as it respects the tolerant government of our favoured country, but why should not this circumstance be improved to urge the necessity of faithfulness in the ministry of reconciliation ? It surely ought to encourage the labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, when they see the earth swallowing up the flood of persecution which heretofore issued from the mouth of the Dragon. Can it be a reasonable excuse, for unfaithfulness in labour, to urge that but little danger appears to oppose ? The same spirit manifests its disposition in ecclesiastical governments, in many instances, now, which formerly, when coalesced with civil power, used whips, dungeons and the stake to maintain the abominable pride of infallibility. And it is against this spiritual wickedness in high places, that divine wisdom directs the gospel warfare.

Though it would be far from just to insinuate that the Saviour was disposed to indulge the profane in their irreligious lives, as a reason why he was so sparing of heavy denunciations against them, it is evident that he viewed the Church as the great and mighty strong hold, where his adversary had fled as his last resort. Against this fortress, therefore, he directed the majesty of his arm. Fearful woes and alarming warnings were ministered to that rebellious house. That church was the Edom where his garments were to be stained, and where his victory was finally glorious. Sin in the present day, and ever since the Christian apostacy, has taken shelter in the Church ; sitting in the temple of God ; shewing himself to be God. Possessing this strong hold, he directs his unmerciful thunders of condemnation against those who do not subscribe to his magna charta. This city is to be burnt with fire. Let those who are chosen to bear arms against it, be faithful.

4thly. As has been observed, the faithfulness of Christ is

seen in his having no will nor work of his own, but attending to the will and work of him who sent him. The importance of this faithfulness rests on the perfection of goodness in the scheme of the father's purpose, which we have observed in our first section. As it was not possible to deviate from the plan and wisdom of God, by adding any thing which could make it better, or by omitting any thing unnecessary, faithfulness in adhering strictly to divine directions, was of infinite importance. So in that ministry which is committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us, faithfulness must be considered as indispensable. Unfaithfulness to the will and work which God has revealed in Christ, setting up a will and a work for which no directions are given in God's word, has led the Church into the wilderness, through the instrumentality of blind guides, who studied their own gratifications more than they did the will of God. Then it became the trade of Priestcraft to make the word of God's will bend to the word of the will of Antichrist, who having set up his rebellion against the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, endeavors to prove and maintain that the sin of the world never will be taken away. If God says *he will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*, Antichrist says, God never did really will that such an event should take place. The fact is, vain men have a WILL which is opposed to the WILL of God, and they are so deceived that they think it must be more pleasing to God than the WILL expressed in the above scripture. What have been the evil consequences resulting from this unfaithfulness to the will of God? Let the silent unutterable pangs of despair, the anguish of millions racked with unholy fear, the briny tear which bathes the supposed reprobate infant, tell the lamentable tale! Children of our heavenly father, and heirs of eternal life in Christ, in the room of being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, have been taught to believe that they were the objects of God's wrath and vengeance the moment they were born! How different from the testimony of Jesus is such doctrine? In faithfulness to his father's eternal purpose, we hear him say, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

Had the christian ministry been as faithful to adhere to the law and the testimony, as they have been to invent

creeds of their own devices, and had they known or acknowledged no covenant but that which is ordered by heaven, and in all things sure, they would have kept the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.

All the unhappy divisions, the murderous persecutions, the disgraceful animosities, and the unchristianlike coldness and indifference which have cast such a stigma on the name of christianity, are to be set to the account of unfaithfulness in those to whom the people looked for instruction, to the plainly revealed will of God. This particular brings the importance of faithfulness in the ministry, very sensibly to our understandings; for we live in a day in which we see and know that those things have and do exist. What can be more inconsistent than a belief in the mercy of God, whereby we hope our sins are forgiven, and a disposition to condemn and disfellowship every one who may chance to differ from us in opinion? How different from the disposition of our merciful and faithful high-priest, who has compassion on the ignorant, and them who are out of the way.

5thly. It appears just to notice, as another powerful incentive to faithfulness in administering the treasures of the word of life, the love which is justly due to our divine master, and the wants of the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost sets the minister, as an overseer. To these particulars the risen Jesus very feelingly led the mind of his servant Peter, by first enquiring of him respecting his love to himself, and having received an answer the third time in the affirmative, all the blessed lover of mankind required of Peter, as a demonstration of the sincerity of his love to him, was to feed his sheep and lambs. The sentiment seems to be this: Simon Peter, you have been with me as an intimate through my ministry; you have seen the works which I have done; there was a time when you thought that though all men should forsake me, you should not, but you fell when the hour of temptation came; you were a witness to my crucifixion, and you now know that I am alive from the dead; I am now going to leave you, personally, in this world, for a little time, for glorious purposes corresponding with my labors in the salvation of mankind. Now, Simon Peter, if you have any love for me, show that love by feeding my redeemed sheep and lambs. In you, Simon Peter, let my flock find a constant, faithful shepherd. You must not despise their infirmities, you must not neglect them because

you do not receive, in all instances, due returns from them; for it is for the love which you have for me, that you are to serve my flock. Be careful to give them no other food than such as I give you, bestow on no other conditions than those on which you have received. You will remember how profanely you denied me, and never forget the constancy of my love for you; be faithful, therefore, as my minister, to my redeemed, and ever assure them that I am the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

6thly. Possessed, as the minister of the gospel is, with all the natural appetites, passions and imperfections common to other men, it requires a faithfulness which will occupy every hour of his life, to avoid being overcome, through the medium of some of those avenues through which sin finds its way to the human heart. It is necessary to keep constantly in mind, that the eyes of the Great Shepherd are looking on the path which is trodden. That the ministers of the word are a spectacle to angels and to men, to exercise constant desires to God, that he may preserve his chosen vessel in honor, to keep the body under, lest when having preached the gospel to others, the preacher becomes a castaway. How unlike the meek son of Mary, is the haughty, heady, high-minded parson, who studies more the vain fashions and customs of the times, than he does the holy scriptures? Who is more ready to entertain a thoughtless company with unprofitable amusements, than willing to taste the sweets of retired study, by which he would be enabled to give instruction to others. But O! how refreshing, even as the rain and the dew from heaven, are the communications of the Scribe who is well instructed into the kingdom of heaven, bringing out of his treasures things new and old.

7thly. Let us notice the importance of faithfulness in the ministry, as noticed in our text, in relation to time, **UNTO DEATH.** There is no period of life to which the minister of the word may arrive, which will justify his throwing off the armour of God. The sin which most easily besets those who have for a long time labored in the vineyard, is that of supposing that they have learned all that there is to be known by men in this world. Having this notion fixed in the mind, in room of sitting at Jesus' feet to receive further instruction, the opinionative man wishes every body to sit at his feet, to learn what he learned when he was young. But as the light of the gospel, like that of the natural day, is in-

creasing, and rapidly advancing, the man who has made his stand, will think others are all going wrong. Thus he not only loses the sweets of fellowship and the refreshments of the traveller, but becomes unprofitable in his calling. As a suitable remedy against such folly, we think proper to consider the words of the Lord Jesus to Saul. Arise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. St. Paul, by the authority of his Lord, could witness to the things which he had seen, but had no direction to reject further communications; on the other hand, he was made a minister and a witness of those things in the which his Lord should after appear to him. Thus it appears that he ever continued expecting new manifestations, which led him to say, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ."

But we may suppose the race at an end, and the victory won. What remains? Let the conquerors be crowned; weave garlands of immortal flowers; bring hither leaves of never-fading laurel, and the deathless olive; they have been faithful unto death, they shall receive crowns of life.

We come to the consideration of the second division of our text.

1st. The great apostle of the Gentiles, speaking of the christian race, represents it by those who strove for the mastery in the Grecian games, and says, "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible." And this crown he more particularly explains in the following words, speaking to those to whom he and his fellow-labourers had imparted the word of life. "*For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.*" How glorious is such a crown. Earthly monarchs, prompted by ambition and pride, have waded through the blood of their fellow-men to obtain their perishable crowns. But here are incorruptible diadems whose lustre will outshine the stars of heaven, when earthly honors are forgotten. Among the innumerable joys of the world to come, he who has been a faithful and true witness

of all those things in the which his Lord has appeared to him, will realize with infinite delight, the souls who have been delivered from darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, through his ministry.

On that day when these crowns are distributed according to the faithfulness of the servants of the Lord, such questions will not be asked as now appear to be of the first importance. No enquiry will be made whether the subject was educated at an honorable seminary; no question about his elocution; nothing will be named of his great or little natural abilities; no credentials of doctor of divinity will be demanded; nothing said respecting denominations. The sole question must be this, *Was he faithful unto death?* He who was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, and he who was called from his fishing net, must wear crowns according to their faithfulness.

2dly. By holding out such a rich reward as an encouragement to faithfulness in the ministry, our text refutes the unscriptural, unreasonable, and chimerical doctrine of *uninterested benevolence*. Chimerical indeed, as no such principle of moral action exists in the universe. Why did God give his Son to die for us? "God so LOVED the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Love surely gives the deepest interest in the object loved, of which the rational mind can conceive. Why did Moses refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and chuse rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? "He had respect unto the recompence of reward." Why did our blessed Lord endure the cross and despise the shame? "For the joy set before him." Why did the Apostles of the Lamb suffer the loss of all things? "For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

By the foregoing we see that the Gospel enjoins no duties but such as are accompanied with rich rewards, and requires no faith, but such as is attended with love, joy and peace.

It may not be improper nor unprofitable to take a summary view of the general subject, as it has been applied and illustrated.

As high and important considerations of the reasonableness of faithfulness in the ministry of the Gospel, a number of particulars have been suggested. At the head of these

stands the faithful and gracious purposes of our heavenly father, in the eternal salvation of mankind, in Christ his ever blessed Son ; the promises which God made of universal blessings in the promised seed, and the testimony that he who hath promised is faithful.

Next was brought to view the faithfulness of the mediator, as he acted through the whole of his mediatorial office, with reference to those establishments of the purposes of his father, in the destruction of sin and death, and the deliverance of mankind from all their woes, to the bliss of reconciliation to God.

Notice was taken also of the opposition which now appears against the Gospel, similar to what appeared in the days when Christ was on earth, and the necessity of equal zeal and faithfulness now, as was then necessary to oppose the torrent of Pharisaical righteousness and religious pride. To this opposition, it has been observed, our blessed Saviour opposed the moral virtues, with all their divine energies ; and too much care cannot now be exercised in this particular, for nothing can overcome evil but good. Under this head was urged the necessity of patterning after Christ in prayers, watchfulness, meekness, patience, vigilance in labor, and painful sufferings, and of improving the mild, tolerant government of our happy country, as an encouragement in the faithful discharge of ministerial labours. Particular notice of the necessity of the servants of the Lord paying strict attention to no WILL or WORK of their own, was thought not to be improper. And in this section is pointed out the evils, in short, which have been experienced in consequence of those who profess to teach mankind the knowledge of divine things, departing from the plain revealed WILL of God, and setting up their own WILLS in opposition. The necessity of faithfulness has been urged on the very just ground of that love which the servant of the Lord ought to feel to his divine master, and the wants of the flock of God, whom he is directed, by the Holy Ghost, to lead to the green pastures of the redeemer's grace.

The imperfections of our earthly nature, our proneness to go astray, has been urged, and no doubt with propriety, as a reason why the servant of the Lord should be faithful in the government of all the natural appetites and passions. A remedy has been prescribed against a folly which too often overtakes the labourer in the vineyard of the Lord, when

advanced in life. To this due attention ought to be paid, that the servant may finish his course with joy, and not in vexation. We have noticed the glorious crown of rejoicing, which, in the presence of angels, will be placed on the head of the faithful in the day of the Lord Jesus. And have found that divine revelation holds out such encouragements with a manifest design to interest us in doing well.

REVEREND BROTHER,

In addition to your successful labors of love in the country, your brethren in the ministry rejoice in your having, by the blessing of the great head of the church, been enabled to feed the sheep and lambs of the spiritual fold in this place. It is with confidence in your sincerity and faithfulness in the ministry of the gospel, that this Council have obeyed the voice of this newly formed society, to assist them in their public acknowledgement of you as their minister in the Lord. Here, we hope, under your ministry, to see this vine of our heavenly father's planting, flourish for a long time to come; here, we humbly pray that God would add many souls to the happy number which may sparkle with divine beauty in the crown of your rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Christian brethren and friends of this parish—The Council feel disposed to congratulate you on this solemn and joyful occasion. Your prosperity hitherto as a society, has been noticed with great satisfaction: and though our local situations and circumstances have not permitted us to visit you so often as we could have desired, our constant prayers for the promotion of your spiritual interest have been fervent; and it is our reasonable duty on this occasion to acknowledge the goodness of God in building up the cause of Zion in this place.

Having joined with you in the former part of this day, in the dedication of this convenient edifice to the public service of God, and now in setting apart a brother in the ministry of the everlasting Gospel, to your spiritual service, our cup of divine comfort is full. May the good will of him who dwelt in the bush, abide with you, and render the connection between you and your pastor, a lasting blessing to both.

DEDICATION AND RE-INSTALLATION.

On the 5th of September instant, the new brick Meeting House, erected by the first Universal Society in *Charlestown*, (Mass.) was publicly dedicated. The services commenced at 10 o'clock A. M. The dedication discourse was preached by the Rev. EDWARD MITCHELL, of Boston, from 2d Chronicles, 5th chapter, 13th and 14th verses. In the afternoon of the same day, the Rev. ABRAHAM KNEELAND was re-installed Pastor of that Church and Society. Sermon by the Rev. HOSEA BALLOU, of Portsmouth, N. H. from Revelations ii, 10, last clause. The delivery of the Scriptures, and Charge, by the Rev. THOMAS JONES, of Gloucester, Cape Ann. And the Right Hand of Fellowship by the Rev. EDWARD TURNER, of Salem, Mass. A numerous assembly witnessed with the deepest solemnity and most dignified attention, the transactions of the day. A large band of vocal and instrumental performers of music, by a judicious selection, and elegant and impressive performance of several appropriate pieces, heightened the moral pleasure, animated the devotion, and increased the rapturous joy of the Congregation.

DIED,

At Murraysville, in Pennsylvania, on the 16th day of May last, the Rev. NOAH MURRAY, aged 66, for many years a faithful, laborious, and able Preacher of Universal Salvation. The circumstances attending his death, reflected high honor upon the Christian vocation, and evinced the strong exercises of that faith which rises superior to trials and death. A record of such events is not only honorable to the departed, but may be blessed of God to the edification of the Churches. Mr. Murray was seized with a violent typhus fever, on the 6th of May, and after 10 days severe struggling with the disease, finished his earthly course. During the whole period, his mind was filled with divine consolations; and he went on his way rejoicing in the Lord Jesus; and having lost all power of speech for two or three days before his death, yet still retaining the unclouded light of his reason, he made signs for a table, and pen and ink, and left a written testimony behind him, in addition to the many expressions which had fallen from his lips, while able to speak, that he died as he had lived, in the fulness of faith, nothing doubting. His remains were interred on the 18th, with civil and masonic honors: and his funeral sermon was preached to the Church and Society in Philadelphia, to which he had formerly preached, by the Rev. GEORGE RICHARDS, their present pastor, from Hebrews 11th chap. 13th verse.

POETIC DEPARTMENT.

SOLITUDE.

Hail Solitude divine !
 Blest seat of mental joy and holy love,
 Where man, the mighty works of God may prove.
 Lo ! at thy peaceful shrine,
 A new come suppliant asks a calm retreat,
 Like that which led of old the meditative Isaac's feet.*

Is Solitude thy name ?
 Methinks the term is greatly misapplied ;
 For, in thy temple, man to God allied,
 Discovers whence he came ;
 There angels dwell, to sacred rapture given :
 The fellow-servants of the earthly heirs of heaven.

There too, in mildest beams,
 Our all benignant Jesus shows his face,
 And while his heavenly features we can trace,
 And catch the trembling gleams :
 The pliant mind of man, with reason warm,
 Receives the lively outlines of his precious form.

There God himself is known,
 In matchless grandeur deck'd, and mighty power,
 Which lead the soul to wonder and adore,
 Before his flaming throne.
 Then, Solitude, to thee I give this name,
 The audience chamber of the Glorious, Great I AM.

There would I choose to rest
 My aching head and wandering feet a while,
 From busy cares and life's distracting toil ;
 And on my Saviour's breast,
 Like favor'd John, of old, I would recline,
 And make his rapturous joys and all his pleasures mine.

* "And Isaac went out to meditate in the fields at even tide."

Gen. xxiv, 63.

THE GOSPEL VISITANT.

VOL I] FOR DECEMBER, 1811 [N . 3 .

SIR RICHARD STEELE'S LETTER TO THE POPE.

(CONCLUDED.)

NAY, it is hardly credible what I could relate to you, of the usage he hath receiv'd from those who most of all, would, in time, have found the want of him, had he not succeeded to this crown.

One of the first complements, he received from his most famous university, was a particular mark of respect, by the unanimous vote of that learned body, given to a man, whom he had, with displeasure, dismiss'd from his service; and whom your friend, the pretender, had he been King here, would have distinguish'd, long ago with honours, for all his hearty service to the Popish cause, in Ireland.

But, can this be a wonder to his majesty, when he once knows, that his very title, and succession to his crown, was a disputed point, between an Oxford decree, and an act of Parliament; that he now possesseth his crown against the solemn decree of that learned body; and a decree, which still hangs up, to the view of the world, unrepealed, as an open testimony of the tender regards of those who own it, to his cause, and of the sincerity of their hearts, in abjuring the Popish line.

And from the members of his other university; what hath he received? If violent, and tumultuous riots, beyond what almost any other parts, of his kingdom have seen, be a distinguishing mark of affection, and good-will; they have given it him, beyond all doubt,

I confess, this hath been some part of his publick reception. The noise of those pulpits, to which the word of God, and of peace, have been long strangers; the affront of the universities, those two bright luminaries of the world of literature; the riots of the learned; and the tumults of the unlearned, the insinuations of the cunning, and the mirth of the witty; the passions of the weak, and the rage of the disappointed; the fears of the guilty, and the hopes of those who have nothing to lose: all, under the conduct and management of the friends of the pretender, and the emissaries of your church, have played their part to perfection; and, by the loudness of their clamours, have put the air around us, into some sort of commotion and disorder.

But, be assured, this is all the advantage, you and your friends, can reap from it. The disadvantage is to come. These disorders are well understood to be the bold efforts of guilt, and despair, united: into which, many ignorant or well-meaning people, have been unwarily led. But the contrivers and directors of them all, find no issue from them, answerable to their designs.

The whole conduct of the machine was plainly intended, to make themselves and their party, look terrible to a King, just come amongst us; and so to affright and force him into their measures, whom they took to be as weak as themselves.

But, as he has found that all their noise and violence, could not secure a House of Commons to their wishes: so he is now convinced, by themselves, and their whole procedure, of what he had too much justice to believe of them, till this experience hath put beyond all doubt; that they, who talk loudest of allegiance, or passive obedience, mean it to another and not to him; and understand it to be a duty for others and not for themselves.

They are generally, the same set of men, who of late years never talk'd of non-resistance, but in order to bring a scandal upon the late revolution, and the great instrument of it, King WILLIAM: The same, who alone have all the disturbances and tumults in these parts to answer for through the last twenty six years: the same, who, after having by flatteries, and professions of *passive obedience*, deceived your unfortunate friend King James II, into those fatal measures which ruined him; opposed and crush'd, all the great de-

signs of his successor, whom they invited over, merely to save them from practising themselves, that beloved doctrine which they are never weary of recommending to their neighbours : the same, in a word, who, in their several places and stations, have planted themselves in a direct and settled opposition to every step, which hath conducted his *present Majesty* to the throne.

These are the men, whom your *Holiness* and your friends, have to boast of : but not to trust to, if you are wise, even many degrees below infallibility. All their hints, and intelligencies of another revolution, now spread about by mail, disappear, are only delusions of their dreams. They have had no effect to your advantage, unless, perhaps it is to them, you owe to that one *weak* man after having first, from his *priviledged place*, abused the King, hath made a shew of resigning his preferments. I give your *Holiness* joy of this ; and wish you just as many more such public proselytes, as there are men amongst us, privately of his principles.

This may be one part of that scene, which these reports were designed to open. But as for any other, be assured, that none here are frightened, but those chiefs, to whose guilt the whole party seem now to have wisely tacked their cause ; though some months ago, the guilt was plain to many of themselves : and that none here are alarmed, but those heads who owe Europe an exemplary satisfaction, for all the intricacies and embarrassments with which they have confounded it.

And even now, as I am writing this, if we may judge of the rest, by the conduct of one ; these mighty chiefs, (as soon as they have engaged a set of men, with I know not what pretences, to lose their own reputation, by defending theirs ; and plunged them in, headlong, perhaps too deep, to make a handsome retreat) are preparing kindly to take care of themselves, by flight ; and to leave their friends to their own conduct ; using them after such a manner, as the friends of such men, and of such a cause, deserve to be used.

But whithersoever they fly, they can't fly from themselves ; and wheresoever they are, they carry about them, I do not say the remorse of conscious guilt ; but the torments of disappointed ambition : and ambition, disappointed in the critical minute, when every thing seem'd ready, to execute its designs.

One thing I shall here mention to your holiness, agreeable to what was proposed by a protestant member of the last House of Commons, (whilst these great men were in all their power, amongst us,) and that is "If you can, by any means, prevail upon his most christian majesty, (to whose interest they have shewed themselves such friends,) not only to receive them, if they all take the same route, which one hath; but to give the management of his affairs into their hands, only for as short a time, as our country was bless'd with them; I will undertake, that Great-Britain shall pardon them; and that your Holiness shall have the thanks of Europe.

I have by this time, tired you, and myself: but yet, there are few particulars behind, which I can't persuade myself to pass over in silence.

The *Old Primate* still breathes: and breathes the same spirit of christian liberty which he ever did; and the same haired of all spiritual usurpation and tyranny, that bears any resemblance to your's. May he long breathe! And may his last days be made serene and easy, by the return of all that regard and deference, which his former labours and constancy, have merited.

He sees himself surrounded by a bench of brethren, who have stood the shock of the day of trial, and brought off immortal Glory. I forbear, out of tenderness to tell you, what excellencies they are possess'd of; or what a confidence all true Britons place in them.

One indeed, is removed from us: and one, to whose services, this nation owes an eternal monument. I have a passion for his great name: but no words of mine ought to be joined to it. I would pay some tribute to a memory, dear to *Liberty* and *Religion*, if any thing I could say, could add to a reputation, and character, acquired, supported, and enlarged, by pastoral labours, unintermitted from his earliest youth, to his latest old age; and by writings which will give life to the name of BURNET, long after the names of his enemies shall cease to be remember'd. Your church hath ever paid him respect of fear; and the world will, in ages to come, pay to his memory, that love and admiration, which the *ungrateful* of the present age, denied to himself.

Were there no other reason to think so, I should be cer-

sals, that this news will give you, and your friends abroad, some joy ; because it hath given it to that party of protestants, (as they call themselves) among us, who always partake in your Holiness's pleasures.

I will hasten from this unpleasant subject, and take leave of your Holiness, with a proposal, as odd and romantick in appearance, as this whole address may seem ; but in reality, neither odd, nor romantick any otherwise, than as all justice and simplicity, and plain-dealing, are esteem'd to be so, in a degenerate, and corrupted age.

But, if it be so, that I am, in this transported beyond due bounds ; let all the fault be imputed to the subject, I have been upon.

The state of religion, on a'l sides, is a scene of astonishment : and the surprise of things, to which I have been heretofore a stranger, hath I confess, filled me with an enthusiasm, too warm to be contained.

Descend, HOLY FATHER, from your *Seven Hills* and disdain not to tread upon the *Level Plain*. Unrobe yourself of a'l the gaudy attire of a pompous superstition. Lay aside all the *embarrassments* of worldly grandure. Turn your eyes from the coffers of gold and silver, of which, your great predecessor St. Peter, and his greater Master had none. Acknowledge Religion to be something more, than being wrapt up in a heap of fine vestments ; or being skill'd in a dexterous performance of *Antick Gestures*.

And then look *inwards*. Divest yourself of your *infallibility*, and own yourself to be like one of us. As to renounce a kingdom for your church, hath been accounted the height of honour and saintship : so now it will be your glory, in the most exalted degree, to renounce in the name of your church, a double kingdom for Christ : that temporal kingdom, which, in his name and to his reproach, you have erected over the bodies, and estates ; and that spiritual one, which you have established over the consciences of mankind.

Remember, in the midst of all your luxury, and delicacy, and ostentation, what ground you stand upon. The bowels of the earth are armed against you. The shocks of earthquakes, and the eruptions of volcanos, besides the common calamities of nations, are but the beginnings of that day of vengeance, which will come ; unless you prevent it, by a speedy conversion to christianity.

Renounce therefore your golden keys and your fruitless kingdoms. Throw away your popperies and your indulgencies, and your possessions, and your canonizations. Shew yourself in the nakedness of simplicity ; and take the gospel into your hand, and into your heart. Call in your emissaries, and missionaries, from all parts of the world : and let them receive instruction themselves before they pretend to convert others.

Trouble the world no more, with quarrels about *Holy Sepulchre* ; but believe, that he is risen, who once was laid in it. Let the wood of his cross cease to be magnified, to an immense bulk ; and his natural body cease to be multiplied to an infinite number. Restore the heads of holy men, and women, to their bodies, if they can be found. Let the bones of the dead saints be at rest ; and their blood be released, from the perpetual fatigue of working wonders.

Throw up all your legends ; discard all your miracles, stated and unstated ; and make over all your tricks, to the jugglers of this world. Declare to the Jesuits, that their game is at an end ; and restore the inquisition to hell in which it was forged.

And for the conclusion of this great work, celebrate an open and solemn marriage between faith and reason : proclaim an eternal friendship between piety and charity ; and establish an agreement, never to be dissolved between religion, on one side ; and humanity, forbearance, and good nature on the other.

I would not have you think that I propose all this to your Holiness, and nothing from our own quarter. So far from it, that I am free to acknowledge, that it cannot be expected that you should thus far recede from your present pretensions, unless others are ready to give up every thing of the same sort and the same nature.

If your Holiness parts with infallibility, it is but equitable, that the protestant churches should part with indisputable authority. If you give up the decrees of the council of Trent ; let them in Holland, give up the synod of Dort ; and others, every where throw off all manner of human decisions, in religion. If you discard the inquisition ; let them discard classes, and judicatories, and consistories, and fines, and imprisonments ; and the whole train of secular artillery, and the whole armory of the weapons of this world.

If you make all your great names bow, and pay homage to Christ; let them bring forth their army, on the other side; and let Calvin, and Luther, and Zuinglius, and Knox, and Land, and Baxter, and all other idols, bow down to Christ. Let Christians cease to be called by their names; and let them who have one master, have but one common denomination.

And let the whole be sealed with the *kiss of charity*, and with all the tokens of benevolence and love.

But whether you, or they, will hear, or forbear; whether any thing of this sort shall be done, or not done; *I have delivered my soul.*

I had an impulse upon me, to say all this. I have followed that impulse: and *what I have said, I have said.*

I have opened my heart to your Holiness: and you may make what use you please of it.

If you think fit to accept my correspondence, I faithfully promise to give you from time to time, an exact account of the state, in which we protestants are, or are like to be.

For the present; without farther ceremony, or apology, I kiss your Holiness's feet, not in a religious, but in a civil manner; and am,

Your most faithful friend, or,
generous adversary,
RICHARD STEELE.

MR. KNEELAND'S FAREWELL SERMONS.

Delivered in consequence of his dismission from the Church and Society in Langdon, N. H.

SERMON I. Heb. xiii. 1. "*Let brotherly love continue.*"

OF all the exhortations ever given to man, none can be more conducive to their present peace or future felicity than the excitements to *brotherly love*; and as this principle is necessary to the present happiness of mankind, so the continuance of this principle is necessary for the continuance of that happiness.

The All-wise and beneficent Jehovah, our heavenly father, in giving to mankind a constitution consistent with his plan of infinite goodness, placed himself, whom the spirit of divine revelation declares to be LOVE, as the everlasting and immutable foundation of all that good that was to be ultimately enjoyed by all his rational creatures. And if God be love, a manifestation of this divine principle in us, clearly demonstrates that "we are the sons of God." Hence the rational contemplative mind is ready to conclude, that every quality of moral nature of which we are possessed, is a modification of the same Divine Being manifested in us his children. And as all these modifications have been directed by infinite wisdom and goodness, they prove to us beyond all contradiction, that the love of our heavenly Father to his own offspring, or to beings produced by an action of his own divine nature, can be nothing short of *infinite love*. In this point of view the love of God may be justly considered *parental*, because it must embrace in its affection the best good of all creatures whom it has been the means of bringing into existence. The apostle undoubtedly had reference to this love when he said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his *great love* wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." (Eph. ii: 4, 5) The exercise of this heavenly principle in man, being directed by that wisdom which dwelleth with prudence, and that charity which seeketh not her own, is styled *brotherly love*—and well it may be—because, being allied to, and of the same nature of the fountain from whence it sprang, it embraces in the arms of its affection, and bears on the altar of its most feeling heart, each and every rational creature which has descended from the father of the spirits of all flesh.

We shall not attempt to describe this heavenly principle, nor to analyze it, abstractly from its effects. "None by searching can find out the almighty to perfection." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit."

As your ever affectionate brother and friend, who has ever felt interested in your present happiness, as well as your future felicity, through the interposition of that All-wise providence who seeth not as man seeth, is about to ad-

dress you, probably, for the last time—as the place where he has spent his principal labors, for upwards of eight years, is now to be vacated—and as the events of futurity are hidden from our present view—he has felt the weight of the exhortation of the inspired apostle, and a sincere desire to impress its importance on the minds of those for whom he has so long travailed in birth, that Christ might be formed in them the hope of glory; and to leave it as his last will and testament, the legacy of his affection, to be their guide to every thing that is truly desirable in this world, and to be the ground work of all their hopes in things pertaining to that world which is to come. “*Let brotherly love continue.*”

The present occasion, as well as the importance of the text, is too interesting to suffer an individual to be indifferent to the subject. It is a subject that equally concerns all. The old and the young, the rich and the poor, the wise and the ignorant, are equally benefited by *brotherly love*. It is not confined to any particular sect, or denomination of people, but it is that, and that only, which *adorns* all who are blest with its benign influence. “Love is of God; and he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love—hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

You are not, my brethren and friends, on this occasion, hailed with the tale of woe; your ears are not corroded with the unwelcome tidings of sorrow; (unless it be at the thoughts of the departure of him who has ever endeavored to promote your present and ultimate good;) you are not saluted with the angry looks of an injured friend, nor with the grim sentences of a disappointed foe; you are not accused with the want of brotherly love, but my text rather supposes the contrary; and you are therefore saluted on this occasion with the sweet and most profitable exhortation, “*Let brotherly love continue;*” enforced by one whose first and last wish concentrates in your present and future felicity:

In attending to this text, I shall follow the path, and make use of the arguments of a worthy brother* who has gone on the same subject; and then close with an applica-

* Brother Hosea Ballou. See his festival Sermon, delivered at Chester, Vt. June 24, A. L. 5806.

tion, as the occasion may require. And in order to not lose sight of the analogy between causes and their effects, I shall

I. Shew the cause, source, or fountain, from which brotherly love proceeds, arguing its agreement, or consistency with its cause.

II. Shew the effects of brotherly love; arguing that those effects are perfectly consonant to their cause. And,

III. Shew the necessity of the *continuance* of brotherly love, in order to *continue* its glorious and happy effects.

I. I am to shew the cause, source, or fountain, from which brotherly love proceeds, &c.

1. As each and every moral faculty which exists in us is derived from the father of the spirits of all flesh, the father of our moral nature, it must be evident that those faculties existed in God anterior to their existing in us; therefore the cause of our possessing any, or all of them, is, they have an original existence in God: And the cause of our possessing any natural faculty or propensity, is, they have an original existence in the principles of nature. It is an eternal law of nature that nothing can give that which it does not possess. Hence, the creator gave no property to his offspring which did not first exist in him. Parents can communicate, by the laws of generation, no quality to their offspring that they do not first possess in themselves. Could this be done, in as great a degree as it was, the offspring would have no relation to its parents. And could it be effected in every quality, then in such a case, there could be no relation at all. But our wisdom and understanding extend no further than to behold in the offspring the qualities of the parents, and that the reason why those qualities exist in the child, is, parents possessed them first.

2. God having in his divine fulness, power to communicate his own moral nature to the works of his hands, is a second reason or cause of brotherly love. The simple existence of love, in God, could never have produced its likeness in us, if deity had not been possessed of the power of emitting, or, in some other way, of communicating that principle to his creatures, in the eternal laws by which he constituted us moral dependent beings.

3. The Great Creator and organizer of nature has wisely constituted and ranged the various properties and qualities of

our existence is perfectly consonant to the harmony of his own divine nature, fixing in each moral being the same moral principles whose nature is an eternal union.

4. God, in giving man a conscious existence made his own happiness the greatest possible object of all his actions, and placed brotherly love as the centre of that happiness. Thus each individual happiness, however unknown to the creature at present, is inseparably connected with the happiness of all, and the happiness of all embraces the happiness of each individual.

5. Our daily experience, by which we, not only come to the knowledge of ourselves, but also learn the relation in which we stand to our fellow creatures of the same species, is productive of brotherly love. This, though it may be considered the immediate cause, stands in relation to all the rest; so that it could not exist without the foregoing, neither could the former be effective without this. Agreeably to those causes, collectively, the effect is produced, and brotherly love is brought forth in the rational mind.

The eternal love of Jehovah, that great love wherewith our heavenly father loved us, when we existed only in the eternal mind, which love is the essence of his nature, is a boundless ocean, which can neither be increased nor diminished, and is the same to every rational creature which the power of God has produced. This kind of love, by the power of God, is fixed as a principle of our moral nature; which renders love the centre of all rational happiness. The knowledge of this, i. e. that love, or the exercise of the eternal principle of moral existence, is the centre of all rational felicity, we obtain only by experience, which experience finally produces the desired effect, bringing our souls into a rational union in the divine affections, and thereby brotherly love is implanted in the understanding.

This brotherly love, as an *effect* produced in us by the foregoing *causes*, agrees with and answers to the causes that produce it.

1. It is as extensive according to the knowledge and experience of the creature, as the fountain from whence it sprang, affectionately embracing all rational beings who are constituted with those same moral principles, which in themselves are divine. It is no more in the power of a man who understands the principles of his own moral nature, and is

in the free exercise of those principles, unbiased by any extrinsic cause, to hate a single principle of which a moral being is made, then it is in his power to hate the fountain from whence those principles come. Therefore, "he who loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him."

Again. It is justly said, "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" (For we can see God only by understanding the nature and properties of those things which he has made.) Therefore, if a soul could love God, and hate that creature who is made in the image or similitude of God, it would seem that the effect was dissimilar to its cause; which is utterly impossible. "This commandment have we received from him, that he who loveth God, should love his brother also." And it is presumed that no one need to be informed that they are all our brethren who possess the same moral principles with us, sprang from the same fountain, created by the same almighty being, and, of course, are the offspring of the same divine parent.

2. It must also be evident that the motions of this divine affection, or the heavenly principle of brotherly love in us, are subject to that all governing power by which the Deity rules in the hearts of the children of men, and turns them whithersoever he will as the rivers of water are turned. All the moral faculties are governed by some extrinsic cause, and the moral action is as certain to follow the moral cause as the rays of the sun are certain to produce light and heat.

It is not in the province of our wills to say we *will* or will *not*, love the same object under the same circumstances, and at the same time; for what we love we have no power to hate, and what we hate, we have no power to love. It is true, we may hate an object to day, in consequence of being deceived in its quality, and being undeceived, to-morrow, love the same object; but even in that case we should never love what we now hate, in the abstract, for the change is wrought in the understanding of the creature, and not in the principle of his affections, nor in the object of his love.

3. When we are brought to feel the operations of this heavenly principle of brotherly love, in deed and in truth, we find it constitutes in our understandings a harmony of all the rational powers of the mind, and enables us to discover the eternal union of all moral principles.

4. No argument is necessary to prove, to one whose heart has ever been touched with the fine feelings of the divine affection, that this brotherly love, in its effects, is the centre of all our rational happiness. For "he who loveth not his brother is a murderer, and *we* know that no murderer hath eternal life *abiding* in him."

5. Brotherly love is obsequious to its immediate cause, which (as has been shown) is our *experience* producing *knowledge* of the true nature of objects; agreeably to which knowledge, we love ourselves in *others*; i. e. in our *children*; in our fellow nature; beholding one universal brotherhood concentrated in Jesus Christ, our elder brother, the *head* of every man, who is the *image* of God, and the brightness of his Father's glory—the fountain of love and unbounded goodness—in which divine image, man was created.

Having spoken briefly of some of the causes of brotherly love, which may be all found on rational principles, agreeable to the nature and system of things, we shall proceed, as was proposed,

II. To illustrate the effects of brotherly love, arguing that those effects are perfectly consonant with their cause.

1. We may trace every blessing which we enjoy, and every good for which we hope, to the source of divine love: Even the holy religion which we profess is the product of the same divine principle. Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, is our *brother* and *friend* in a most sublime sense. He is the "first born among many *brethren*." He "was made in all points like unto his *brethren*." He said, to his father and to our father, to his God and to our God, "I will declare thy name unto *my brethren*, and in the midst of the congregation will I sing praises unto thee." An apostle, speaking of this elder brother of human nature, says, "Who loved us, and gave himself for us." And we may justly observe, that all that our blessed redeemer has done for mankind is the effect of love. God so *loved* the world that he sent his only begotten Son—who came not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. "God commendeth his *love* towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Thus we may see that it was *love* which brought the Saviour into this world of sin and sorrow; it was *love* which warmed his heart with pity for sinners; it was *love* which

engaged him to oppose the religion of those who taught for doctrine the traditions of men, and who trusted in themselves that they were righteous while they despised others ; it was *love* that moved him to teach openly in the synagogues of the Jews, although he knew they went about to kill him. It was this eternal principle of brotherly love which fired his soul with zeal divine, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, granting liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them who were bound. It was love which caused him to submit to the railings and persecutions of the contumacious, and to seek the salvation of his enemies. It was love to his brethren of the human family which enabled him to endure the cross for us, and despise the shame. It was love which was stronger than death, which many waters could not quench, neither floods drown, which triumphed in his dying breath, and enabled him to look with compassion on his murderers and persecutors, crying, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." These, my brethren and friends, are some of the glorious effects of brotherly love, and it will be easy to discover that they all correspond with their antecedent cause ; to wit, the nature of the first principle, God. We have before seen that love is universal ; like the sun, it emits its rays in every direction ; and we may here see that its effects are so likewise. If those works of love, of which we have been speaking, were done for all men, as the holy scriptures positively declare, then they agree with the nature of love, according to that wisdom which is from above, which is without partiality : but if it could be proved that the works of love and grace, done by Christ for sinners, were done but for a few of those who need his mercy, would it not be a sufficient proof that he did not love so extensively as the existence of those moral principles which in themselves are divinely lovely ? And would not such a supposition be attended with another completely destructive of the system of divine revelation ? Most certainly it would ; for then all those positive testimonies of the Mediator's giving himself a ransom for all, tasting death for every man, giving himself to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, &c. would be void of truth and unworthy of trust. For who can put trust or confidence in any system, if its most plain and positive assertions do not mean as they say ? It is an establish-

old law of nature that the same causes, all circumstances alike, must always produce the same effects ; and therefore it must be granted that this established law will always keep every effect in perfect conformity to the cause that produced it. From the foregoing premises we may rationally conclude, that, if Jesus loved only a *few* of mankind, he died only for that *few* ; but if he loved *many*, he died for *many* ; and if he loved *all*, then it is no more than reasonable to believe that he "gave himself a ransom for *all*," yea, "tasted death for *every man*," according to the scriptures : and in believing this, we only believe that the *effect* corresponds with its *cause*.

O my fellow sinners ! Let me entreat you to take one affectionate look at that blessed cross ; and there behold, by an eye of faith, our blessed Saviour in his labors of love ! See him in the travail of his soul for us ! Behold his bleeding hands of mercy extended to a thief on the right hand and on the left ! See his soul in anguish, fraught with the keenest sensations of love and grief, patiently bearing the rage and enmity, the scoffs, and the jeers of the ignorant and profane, while the whole house of Israel with the fulness of the Gentiles were engraven on his heart and borne on his shoulders ! See him carrying us safely through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and landing the whole humanity on the eternal shores of life and immortality ; opening, in the valley of destruction, a door of everlasting hope ! These, these my brethren, are the effects of brotherly love manifested through Jesus, the head of every man ; and they contain the mysteries of that everlasting gospel into which the angels desire to look. O celestial fountain of brotherly love ! With what similitude may I represent thee, or with what comparison mayest thou be compared ? Thou art a Sampson for strength, a Moses for meekness, a Job for patience, a lion for conquest, a lamb for sacrifice, blood for atonement, water for cleansing, spirit for quickening, and the bread of life for the immortal soul !

2. The happy effects of brotherly love in human society very justly claim our attention. It is brotherly love which warms that sacred friendship, in which the faithful enjoy the confidence of each other. Love only inspires the heart to true devotion ; it subdues the passions, softens the affections, discovers a reciprocal interest in truth and fidelity,

and thus prepares the soul for the blessings of real friendship. It is love alone that levels the lofty mountains of human pride, bowing its summit to the valley of humiliation. It is able to bring the greatest kings, princes and potentates of the earth to a level with their vassals. It is this alone which knocks off the galling chains of slavery from the worn with fatigue, who sigh for liberty. Love regards equally the rights of all men; hence it is the foundation of a liberal constitution, and just and equitable laws. Love teaches men how to be free, how to be independent; uniting in one social compact for their mutual interest, and submitting to the voice of the majority for the harmony of the whole. Love selects none for confidential friends but the virtuous and the good, whose hearts become knitted and joined together by that indissoluble chain of sincere affection, like the hearts of David and Jonathan, or the heart of one man, which nothing but death can dissolve. Love breaks down the middle walls of partition, which have been built up by the traditions and superstitions of men, between professed christians, and enables them to walk heart and hand together, among whom no contention should ever exist but that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who most can excel in acts of brotherly love.

Let us look at the effects of brotherly love in a family circle. See the heads of a family, whose hearts have been made one by undissembled sincere affection, perfectly united, living together in complete harmony, forming but one interest, pursuing but one object, to wit, the mutual happiness of each. See the parental affection descending down to their children, awakening their moral faculties, brightening up the principles of brotherly love in their infant and tender minds, assimilating every soul, exhilarating every affection, concentrating all their desires in one ultimate object, to wit, the supreme happiness of all; and dispensing with every gratification that is inconsistent with this ultimate end. Such is the habitation of virtuous friendship, where brotherly love, as a first principle stimulates each individual to action. The voice of one becomes the voice of all, and the happiness of each individual is the general welfare. Let it not then be supposed that our subject is beautiful only in theory, for it is much more so in practice. When love is the reigning passion of the human heart it bridles every turbulent tem-

per, and lays the grosser passions as vassals at the feet. Having learned to be content with the allotments of divine providence, whether it be their fortune to be rich or poor, it does not militate against the principles of brotherly love. Children of the poor are as dear to their parents as those of the rich, and brotherly love may be displayed in a humble cottage as well as in a princely palace.

Let us look a little further, and take a view of the effects of brotherly love in a larger circle. See it the predominant passion in a neighborhood, and you will see friendly neighbors living together in the sweetest harmony. You will see them careful of each others' welfare, choice of each others' reputation, watching daily for an opportunity of bestowing kind offices and shewing themselves friendly. If one be visited with sickness, or misfortune, all are attentive to his wants, and ready to alleviate his circumstances. If one suffer, all suffer with him. Their sorrows, pains, troubles and afflictions are divided and subdivided among the whole, which almost lessens them to nothing; while the good fortune of an individual is highly increased by the participations, and joy it gives to many.

O, my friends, do not fancy that this is all a visionary picture: it is not only possible, but it is altogether practicable. How lovely indeed is the sight, where friendly hearts are endeavoring to ease the pain of the sick, mingling tears with the afflicted, strengthening the hope of the dying and affording consolation to the friends of the dead; bestowing gifts, and doing deeds of charity, to the poor and needy; wiping away, by acts of benevolence, the falling tears from the cheeks of widows and orphans; soothing the unhappy; mitigating their misfortunes, and restoring peace to their troubled minds. How sweet is the conversation of a social circle of neighbors, when the *love* of God manifested through a Redeemer is the subject. Well may their lips be sweetened with sincerity and truth, while their whole conversation is perfumed with the divine fragrance of brotherly love. See their eyes glistening with tears of joy for the redemption of man; while the sentiment of the apostle rebounds with increasing force on the understanding. "Brethren, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another." This heavenly principle of brotherly love is able to extract the poison from the forked tongue of slander, it puts to silence

the secret whispers of falsehood and kills the venom of envy. It is a sure balsam to heal every breach among neighbors. It puts the sweetness of honey into every bitter cup of life, and strews the path of the christian with odoriferous flowers from the garden of innocence. In such a neighborhood, disconsolated sorrow is an utter stranger, and the destroyer of peace cannot find a residence.

See further the effects of brotherly love in reconciling those, whom either ignorance, or religious superstition and bigotry have made inveterate enemies. If we turn over the page of ecclesiastic history, we find that the stake and faggots, the dry pan and gradual fire, the wheel, the rack, and those cruel engines of torture in the hands of the ruling party, have been employed to dragoon those whom they were pleased to proscribe as heretics, into the abominable belief, (if I may be allowed the expression) that the Almighty was as cruel as themselves. That is, a belief that God would wreak his never ceasing vengeance on mankind, the works of his own hands, when those lenient measures, which he had been disposed to use for their good, had proved ineffectual for their recovery; and cause them to endure such tortures, that no tongue can paint, or pen describe; and of which, all those cruel engines of torture, which persecution itself only could invent, were nothing more than the shadow of a shade in comparison.

Too many, my brethren and friends, at the present day, are the middle walls of partition between mankind in general, and professed christians in particular; and much animosity, schisms, coldness, hardness, debates and strife, are the unhappy consequences. However, it is the glorious work of brotherly love to dissolve those bulwarks of enmity, and teach mankind that pure religion does not consist in outward professions, or ceremony, but in acts of benevolence and charity. Those who believe in a cruel God, will not hesitate at practising cruelty themselves. Those who can believe that the justice of God is incompatible with his mercy, may conduct very unmercifully towards their fellow creatures, and yet vainly suppose that they are doing them good justice. But brotherly love is a safe barrier against a devouring fire to all the machinations of the enemy of unrighteousness; and all the hay, wood and stubble contained in the outward professions and self righteousness of men.

When christians shall with one consent bring every *item* of their faith to the sure test of reason, aided by the plain and positive testimony of holy writ, and contend for nothing but *brotherly love*, then shall the now formidable enemy of christianity become weak and impotent, and the mountain of the Lords house shall be established upon the tops of the mountains of the law and the prophets, and exalted above the hills of error and superstition, and all nations shall flow unto it.

Brotherly love is the only *cement* that can bind the members of any society into one solid compact, forming but one general interest ; and this heavenly principle alone, will be a greater stimulant to insure the faithfulness and fidelity of each individual in discharging their respective duties, than any coercive means that could possibly be used.

Brotherly love inspires the mind with true courage to face death and danger in the discharge of duty. All its pretensions are matters of reality; it is always true, ^{steadfast} to its engagements. It leads a man to do to others as he would be done by, in all the acts of friendship, love and charity. Were this principle in universal exercise among men, the end of all wickedness would come, and moral evil would take an everlasting farewell of the human race. The brazen trumpet would no more enrage the embattled war-horse, nor anger set on the warlike brow of the hero. Swords would be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks. Nation would no more lift up sword against nation, nor learn war any longer. The various sects, names and denominations of professors in religion would lose sight of every thing but the *white stone and the new name*. The middle walls which now separate, would fall like the walls of Jericho. The floods of error would be divided like the mighty waters of Jordan for the Israel of God to pass over. The ransomed of the Lord would return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joys on their heads ; they would obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing would flee away.

"O blessed day, long ago foretold by the prophets of the Lord, and in ages past thy glory has given fire to the poets song—Thou shalt come, thou wilt not tarry. Thy peace shall be like a river, and thy righteousness like the light that

goeth forth. Thou shalt heal the nations of their moral maladies ; thou shalt unite all hearts in sacred friendship ; and fill every soul with joys divine.*

Having, as was proposed, spoken of the causes which have produced brotherly love in the moral system, and having spoken of a few of the many most excellent and happy effects as manifested through a mediator, bringing life and immortality to light and laying the only foundation of rational happiness in human society ; having hinted at some of its happy effects in a family circle, in a neighbourhood, and to the religious world, it remains that we proceed as was proposed : but as time is already elapsed, what further remains must be deferred till the after part of the day. In the mean time, *Let brotherly love continue.*

SERMON II.

Heb. xiii. 1. "*Let brotherly love continue.*"

THESE words were under our consideration in the former part of the day ; and after a short introduction, it was proposed

I. To shew the cause, source, or fountain from which brotherly love proceeds, arguing its agreement, or consistency, with its cause.

II. To shew the effects of brotherly love, arguing that those effects are perfectly consonant to their cause. And

III. To shew the necessity of the *continuance* of brotherly love, in order to *continue* its glorious and happy effects.

LASTLY, make an application of the whole as the occasion may require.

The two first of these we have considered ; and have en-

* It is but just to observe, that notwithstanding the paragraphs, which contain the extracts from the beautiful discourse before mentioned, are not generally marked with quotations, the phraseology being considerably altered, and the arguments considerably enlarged, yet that discourse has been made the ground work of this, thus far, and the principal arguments and most important sentences have been interwoven with the foregoing. But what follows is an addition.

endeavored to make it appear that all the causes of brotherly love concenter in God, the father of our moral nature ; and that this love exists in him as an eternal principle of divine goodness ; which principle he has communicated to us, or has given us a capacity to receive it, in the constitution of our moral existence ; i. e. in making us rational beings. And that God has so constituted moral beings, that all their rational happiness consists in the proper exercise of those moral faculties, agreeably to the ultimate design in the constitution of moral nature. And furthermore we have endeavored to shew the blessed effect of the proper use and exercise of our moral faculties which doth produce all the rational happiness of which the human mind is susceptible. We have endeavored to illustrate those effects, bringing them down to the understanding of the smallest capacity ; and they are such, we humbly conceive, as must strike the rational mind to be desirable objects. Our subject brings the effect of religion nigh home ; where it is mostly needed. It places the reward of the christian, or the reward of brotherly love, in the present tense. It places the reward on such a foundation that it is sure to follow the deed ; for " he that giveth a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward." " It is more blessed to give than to receive." And the reward of virtue and brotherly love, or the reward of the christian, is, *in* the virtuous act ; and *in* the consequences that naturally flow from it. An industrious man is rewarded in his industry ; an economical man is rewarded in his economy ; a prudent man is rewarded in his prudence ; a friendly man is rewarded in his friendship ; and a wicked man is rewarded in his wickedness ; but these things have been so often displayed at large, they need not be dwelt upon at this time.

1. As it is a given point that no effect can exist without its antecedent cause, so it must be equally evident that nothing can be of an eternal duration unless it be either eternally so in its nature ; or else, is produced and kept in existence by an eternal or continued cause. And as it is evident, as has been already shown, that happiness in rational and finite beings, is produced by a concurrence of second causes, so, for happiness to be eternal, in dependent beings, or even of long continuance, it is necessary that the causes on which happiness depends should be alike permanent and durable.

And as it has been shown that brotherly love, or the exercise of holy and virtuous principles, is the immediate cause of rational happiness in finite beings, even so on no other principle can we expect that this happiness will continue ; i. e. only on the continuance of the exercise of that holy and virtuous principle of *brotherly love*.

2. The same argument will hold good in the laws and principles of nature. Were that eternal law which has given order to the grand machinery of nature to quit its function ; were the laws of gravity and attraction, repulsion and cohesion, to cease to operate, the whole planetary system would either be fixed in one state of eternal torpor, or else,

—————"Fly lawless through the void,
"Destroying others, by themselves destroyed."

Were the sun to withhold its cheering rays, or should the gentle showers cease to fall for a short period, how soon must every thing droop and wither, or be congealed in perpetual frost. Were men and other animals to be deprived of food, or were the plants and trees to be plucked from their roots, they must die for want of nourishment. And if those natural things cannot be supported without their antecedent causes, shall we expect to enjoy moral and spiritual life without feeding continually on the bread of God that cometh down from heaven, whereof a man may eat and never die ?

3. In vain may the self-righteous *Pharisee* calculate that for the short period of his being "*not like other men*," he shall be rewarded with an eternal inheritance with the blessed. And equally in vain may the infatuated bigot, who possesses a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, calculate that in consequence of his *past experience* he shall be exalted to particular and exclusive privileges in the world to come. Reason and scripture are both against them. We have no more reason to expect happiness in another world without the continuance of the exercise of brotherly love and affection, that which alone can constitute happiness in finite creatures, than we have to see the fruits of the earth, necessary to support our temporal bodies, grow without any cultivation or care of ours. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son ; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him : in his righteousness (not *for*, but *in* his righteousness) that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die ? saith the Lord God ; and not that he should return from his ways, and live ? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live ? All the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned : in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, *in them* (not *for* them, but *in* them) shall he die.*

From which testimony of the prophet we learn, 1. That those who are styled *righteous*, in scripture, may commit sin, and do as the *wicked man* doeth : if not so, the prophet has warned the righteous to fear where there is no danger. 2. The moment the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, he gets nothing *for* being righteous ; i. e. he gets nothing for all his *past righteousness* ; but when he turns away from his righteousness he is no longer righteous, therefore all his past righteousness is not to be taken into the account ; it is not to be "*mentioned* ;" but *in* his sin he must die. Die eternally ? No ! Unless he committeth sin eternally ; for the moment he turneth from his wickedness, " he shall surely live, he shall not die." And " all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him."

No argument, I think, can be more conclusive, admitting this to be a true statement of facts, to prove the absolute necessity of the continuance of that heavenly principle of brotherly love and affection, in order to continue that happiness which alone can render life a blessing, or even make it tolerable.

Christ said to the Jews, " If you believe not that I am he, ye shall die *in* your sins." And again he saith, " Whither I go ye cannot come." Why not ? Answer. Because they were *dead* ! And as there is no medium between *death* and *life*, so those who are in the state of the *dead*, except they

* Ezek. xviii, 20—24.

be quickened by the life giving power of divine grace, have no power, of their own, to come into *life*. But the apostle saith, "And you hath he quickened who were *dead* in trespasses and sins." It is easy to see that the only consequence of *dying*, is that of being *dead*; and if those who were dead in *sin* have been quickened together with Christ, then those who *die* in their sins through unbelief, may be raised to newness of *life*, by being justified through faith.

The only difficulty respecting this subject appears to rest on the expression, "ye shall die in your sins." And those who can form no other idea of death than a dissolution of the body, and having been taught that the state of mankind is eternally and unalterably fixed at death, have stumbled at the word. Could such ones be brought to realize, that, according to scripture, "to be carnally minded is death," they would be under no necessity of looking beyond the grave for that *death* which is the effect of sin. But should any contend that some go out of the world in an unrenewed state, they ought to be admonished to "judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God."* And could any one demonstrate that some go out of this world in a state of sin, yet they ought to be cautioned against limiting the holy one of Israel, or saying his arm is shortened that he cannot save.

Let them inquire whether it can be consistent, for that eternal principle which is the source of brotherly love, whose power knows no controul, whose wisdom and goodness consult the best good of every creature, to suffer a single soul to go out of the world in an unrenewed state, unless it be in the power; and consistent with the wisdom and goodness of that eternal principle of love, to renew that soul, in another state of existence!

The doctrine which we have had in view in the discussion of this subject, is, that holiness and happiness are inseparably connected. All moral beings are happy in the same ratio as they are holy; and no being can be eternally happy, short of having an eternal principle of holiness implanted in the understanding, to be a governing principle in

* I Cor. iv. 5.

all moral actions : and so *vice versa* ; in order to establish the doctrine of the endless misery of moral beings, we must find an *eternal principle of moral evil*, to be the governing principle of moral actions.

But I hasten to close my subject, and with it, my labours of love in this place, by an

APPLICATION.

RESPECTED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

"He that believeth hath the witness in himself." We may therefore call all those whose hearts have been made warm with the divine principle of brotherly love, to witness to the truth of the doctrine here exhibited. You, my brethren, have felt the influences of this heavenly principle, and you must have been convinced that its source is an exhaustless fountain of moral goodness. You have experienced its happy effects in a family circle, you have felt its benign influences in a friendly neighborhood, and you have seen something of its divine efficacy in reconciling those of the religious world, who, in consequence of difference in sentiment might have otherwise been at perpetual variance.

It was this divine principle that called your ever affectionate brother and friend, to leave his mechanical employment in which he was useful on a small scale, to wield the sword of the spirit, being shielded by the shield of faith, presenting in front the breastplate of *the Lord our righteousness*, weapons that are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down the strong holds, razing the partition walls which have been daubed with the untempered mortar of pharisaical pride, thereby subduing the carnal mind which is enmity against God ; by which many have been delivered from the bondage of moral death into the glorious liberty of gospel grace. "For the love of Christ *constraineth* us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again"* Possessing a firm confidence in the goodness of the cause, and relying on the faithfulness of him who first called your humble servant into the ministry of reconciliation, he has hitherto submitted his worldly

* II Cor. 5 : 14, 15.

concerns, with the cares of himself and family, to the liberality of benevolence and brotherly love ; never as yet placing any estimate or stipulation, upon his labour in the ministry, but freely as he has received, he freely gives. And he has the happiness to observe that his confidence in brotherly love has not yet been misplaced. The free-will offerings of his brethren have been amply sufficient to support his growing family. And altho' they have not been sufficient, as yet to relieve him of every incumbrance, yet his embarrassments have been owing to misfortunes met with before he entered into the ministry, and not for want of adequate support.

Permit me, therefore, my brethren and friends, on this occasion, in justice to my own feelings, and as a debt of gratitude due to the liberality of brotherly love, to recount a few of the many favours which I have received since I have been in this place. Notwithstanding I had spoken occasionally in public for about two years, yet from peculiar circumstances I had entertained serious doubts as to the propriety of pursuing the calling ; and therefore had come to a determination to recede from the work. But in this I was soon convinced that " a man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps. " For no sooner than I had formed this resolution, and for that purpose shifted my place of residence, my then present prospects were all blasted by the hand of him who seeth not as man seeth. I was unable to continue my usual occupation, for the want of health. But having partially recovered again, so as to be able to ride, and from the nature of the complaint the prospect of my future labor remaining doubtful, I was morally compelled the second time to exercise my feeble voice in sounding the gospel trumpet which proclaims "good tidings of great joy, to all people." Under these circumstances, I was invited by your committee to preach in this place. I obeyed the call. And notwithstanding a late admonition which I had received from my Baptist brethren, I was determined, by the help of God, to " stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage." This, my brethren, finally led me to a settlement with you ; and the kind attention and respects which have been shown me during my ministering in this place, is an evidence of that brotherly love and charity which ever are the fruits of the gospel.

In addition to the regular stipulations proposed in my settlement, many of you, my brethren and friends, have often administered to my necessities. Ye have not only said, "Be ye warmed and filled," but ye have also given "those things which are needful to the body." And although there was not a trumpet sounded *before* you, in these acts of charity, yet be assured, the smallest of them have been noticed, and are placed on record as a token of gratitude. They are not only written with pen and ink, but they are also engraved on the tablet of a grateful heart.

When, ah! sad recollection, but in justice to brotherly love I name it; when pale sickness visited my family, and the king of terrors called from my bosom the object of my affection, the interest which my particular friends and neighbors took in my affliction, and the many acts of kindness and needful favors shewn at the time, have made too deep an impression ever to be erased from my memory, till this most feeling heart forgets to be grateful. Her remains, with the last fruit of her womb, being deposited in the same grave, are left with you. The embellished marble, which distinguishes the spot, I leave as a lasting monument of my affection, and as a testimony of your respect.

But it would be a criminal neglect in me, should I omit to mention in this place, the many kind respects which have been shewn to my present partner in life, (who would have been happy to have spent her days with you,) and the peculiar attention that has been paid to our children, some of whom are already old enough to begin to experience the happy effects of brotherly love.

Time would fail me, nor will it be expected on this occasion that I should mention every token of respect or mark of kindness, but there is one circumstance more, which I am unwilling to pass over. Your giving me, for three years successively a seat in the Legislature, I consider not only a mark of your confidence, but a token of sincere respect; which has met my full satisfaction, and merits my grateful acknowledgments.

The cordial agreement, and continued marks of brotherly love in the church, is also a circumstance highly worthy of notice. Not a single complaint has been offered, not a single labor has been had with a brother or sister, during my ministry in this place, as will appear from the records. It

is true, to our great regret, we have been under the painful necessity of dismissing one brother, by his own request, for reasons best known to himself; but we humbly trust, that when brotherly love shall have had its full operation, the breach will be healed, and he will return to his first love. For, like Onesimus, of whom Paul writes to Philemon, "perhaps he, therefore, departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved"*

The punctuality in fulfilling your engagements with me, has been such as to meet my satisfaction. Although it has not been at all times so prompt as could have been wished, yet in the end it is presumed there will be no failure. And if there has been a little remissness in a few individuals, which rendered it necessary for me to go abroad, and to be absent from my family more than was convenient, yet by this means several vacant societies have been supplied in some degree with preaching, which otherwise, perhaps, would have been wholly destitute. And it appears now, that this remissness of a few, has eventually turned to my own benefit; and whether to the advantage, or disadvantage, of those who *possibly* meant it unto evil, time alone will determine. However the inattention of a *few* shall never make me forget the kindness of *many*; and my only desire and sincere prayer to God for those who have neglected their duty, is that, being sufficiently humbled, the neglect in them to exercise a spirit of brotherly love may be overruled for their own good; even as the neglect of brotherly love in Joseph's brethren, eventually terminated (but no thanks to them,) to their own advantage.

Finally, brethren, your condescension in dismissing me, agreeably to my request, and pursuant to the call which I have received, it being apparently very contrary to your wishes, I consider an act of brotherly love. It was indeed in your power to have prevented it for one year, which, perhaps, would have prevented it finally, for in that time, the Society in Charlestown, might possibly have been otherwise supplied. But in this you have looked beyond your own private interest. You have consulted my feelings and interest, and the interest of the cause in general, as well as your

own. The cause and interest of the Redeemer are *one* ; and whoever feels interested in that cause must be condescending. It appears that I may be more extensively useful there than by remaining here, and a permanent establishment with my family is what I have ever desired. It is true, I may now be disappointed, but the prospect, and my prayers, are otherwise. All these things, I presume, have had their proper weight in your minds ; and their forcible operation is that which has given so ready an answer to my request. In all this I see evident tokens of *brotherly love*. And these concurring circumstances ; these marks of friendship, and the harmony in which we have lived, notwithstanding the pleasing prospect before me, render my departure almost *insupportable* !

Such an amicable separation, where there has been such a general satisfaction, is a circumstance which but rarely happens. I say *general satisfaction* ; because we have divine authority in considering those " who are not against us, on our part ;" and therefore, notwithstanding the *remissness*, before mentioned, we may justly consider those, who have not been so opposed as to support a different doctrine, as being *silently* in our favor ; and if I may draw a comparison from the *few sabbaths*, on which you have had preaching of any other *denomination*, I shall be justified in saying, *there has been a general satisfaction* : and as it respects those who are full in the faith, I know of no exception. My only desire is, that the same spirit of brotherly love may still continue ; and although it has become expedient that we should separate, may this not be a means of lessening our affection ; but may we still keep the " unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace."

My regret at the thoughts of leaving you would be considerably lessened, could I but fix my eyes on one who would be my successor ; one who would so dispense the dew drops of divine grace, as not only to keep the church and society together, but to insure a gradual increase. And such an one, I humbly trust, I have recently had in view ; one who has already labored with you in word and doctrine ; one who is endued with peculiar gifts, and capable of much improvement ; one who bids fair to be very useful in the cause ; and, in my opinion, would be an ornament to any

society: and could a door of utterance be opened for him here, and he be disposed to go in thereat, my joy would be full.

But I must, though reluctantly, draw towards a close. I can say with the apostle, "I have kept back nothing which I thought that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that *these hands* have administered unto my necessities." "Wherefore," notwithstanding my many imperfections, and moral infirmities, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For (according to the best of my abilities) I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." And although I hope to have the pleasure of visiting you occasionally, yet it is very possible, and perhaps probable, that many of you, "among whom I have preached the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." And grievous indeed would it be unto me, if "after my departing, grievous wolves should enter in among you, not sparing the flock." But, brethren, I hope better things of you. I trust that you will "stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be entangled again in the yoke of bondage." "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified."*

May you ever keep the cause of Christ nigh your hearts; and may the best of heaven's blessings ever attend you. May you soon be blest with another *pastor*; and may my successor, whoever he shall be, be more successful in disseminating the light and truth of the gospel, and building up the cause and kingdom of Christ, than I have been. May the doctrine of God our Saviour, which embraces the best good of each individual of moral nature, ever drop from this desk like the rain, and distil like the dew; and may you often meet within these walls to hear the life giving word of divine grace dispensed, to unite in humble supplication to the giver of every good and perfect gift, and to tune your hearts and voices in hymning doxologies of praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb. And may you

* See Acts, Chap. 20.

never lose sight of that glorious period, which the beloved apostle, John, saw in vision, when "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea," shall burst forth into one extatic song of thanksgiving and praise, saying, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."*

Finally, brethren, may I be supported, while I bid you all an affectionate FAREWELL. "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with and bless you;" which may God grant for the sake of Jesus Christ his Son, and our Redeemer.

AMEN AND AMEN.

**DELIVERY OF THE SCRIPTURES AND CHARGE TO
THE REV. ABNER KNEELAND, BY THE REV. THOMAS JONES.**

GOD who at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past, unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, said the apostle Paul. This Holy Bible is the history of the "divers manners" and "sundry times, *by* and *in* which, God spoke unto the fathers by the prophets: and of what he hath spoken unto us by his Son. The chosen similitudes of this book, represent that there was an original and supernatural revelation from God to man: but that man soon and very early deviated from the marked path of wisdom: and the dispensation of the Gospel, is the medium of regenerating man into the truth of eternal life hid in God from the beginning.—The medium of bringing man to the original design of God in his formation, even to the knowledge of the life and immortality brought to light in Christ, in favor of mankind, his many brethren: who were given this grace of heavenly immortality in Christ, before the foundation of the world. And all the dispensations recorded in this book, develope God's original, immutable design, to raise mankind his off-

* Rev. 5, 13.

spring to endless life in an age to come. The death of Jesus Christ as the head of every man, exhibits the closing of the state of mortality and suffering. And his personal resurrection exhibits the final portion of human nature ! For life and immortality are brought to light in Christ ; not as a new scheme adopted after creation ; but revealed as the antient path of eternal wisdom and infinite love. As we read, “ In this was manifested the love of God, that he sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him.

This book also contains, love-inspired exhortations and counsels respecting moral conduct among men, conformable to the grace given unto us in Christ Jesus from the beginning. This Book, I am called by this Society to deliver to you in form, as the open expression of their opinion and confidence in you, as able to teach, and to minister to them in holy things.—Take it my Brother—It is the oracle you venerate as holy.—Study it as the theme of divine wisdom. It is a treasure of learning, which has nothing among men equal to it. And I exhort you ; or in other words, to express more vehemence of spirit, and real interest in your success as a servant of the Gospel, I will say, I charge you in brotherly love and friendship, that you be faithful to the light you have received. If you should temporise and say in your heart, “ I have my opinions it is true, which I must ever respect as truth, and can no more deny than I can deny the light, nor cease to be attached to, than I can be indifferent to my own welfare ; but the world is full of prejudices, and I must meet those prejudices, with a mode that will not offend the prevailing current opinion, which may perhaps be as useful as particular statements of what I deem truth.” Such reasoning we shall not be able to justify before the Omnipresent throne of God, and of his son Jesus Christ, our head and Sovereign Lord. But I rejoice, my brother, that I feel fully persuaded of your rigid faithfulness to what you esteem divine truth. You will only attend to discretion, that you run not, nor labour in vain.—Let your statements be clear, and so placed, that no deduction unfavorable unto them may be made from them.

My Brother, preserve alive in your heart that feeling and sympathy derived from your first perception of truth.—Let this “first love” be sacred, and cherished as the holy fire.—From this divine principle, teach, exhort, reprove, persuade.

Here: my brother, you have open ground before you—encrease and multiply in the truth, and God give you many seals to your ministry. You have here a convenient and handsome house to speak in, for God, and a beautiful flock to feed in the rich pastures of grace. Study to shew yourself approved of God and rational men. Visit your society in their afflictions—Account them as so many brothers and sisters, having one Father and one glorious inheritance as joint heirs with Christ Jesus.

And you, the Universalist Society in Charlestown, whom God hath enabled to work wonders, and unto whom he hath said “Show yourselves.” I beseech you to aid and strengthen the hands of our beloved Brother—while he touches the harmonious strings of the Gospel harp—while he bears the commission of the everlasting Gospel, preached unto every creature under heaven! And may the peace of God our father in Christ Jesus be ever your portion.—AMEN.



THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES, AS PRESENTED TO THE REV. ABNER KNEELAND, AT HIS REINSTALLATION IN AND OVER THE FIRST UNIVERSAL SOCIETY IN CHARLESTOWN, MASS. SEPT. 5, 1811. BY EDWARD TURNER, MINISTER OF THE FIRST UNIVERSAL SOCIETY IN SALEM.

WHEN we consider the relations, connections and dependences which exist between the several orders and classes of men in social life, it becomes matter of much satisfaction, that an all superintending and ever watchful parent has granted his offspring the means of expressing the relation they feel to each other, the fraternal sentiment which glows in the affectionate heart. For this purpose, outward signs and appropriate emblems have been adopted, as impressively significant of the internal sensations of the heart; and their utility has been sanctioned by the happy experience of past and present ages. Nor need we wonder at this, when we reflect that it is the established method in which God deals with his rational creatures; for his unchanging love, wisdom and power are exhibited through the medium of

sensible signs, which pleasantly conduct the mind to the highest object, the thing signified. The forms, accompanied with moral instructions, as they have obtained in the Christian churches, are to be understood in the relation we have mentioned ; they are not used for their abstract value, but for their reference to moral and social things. The records which testify that the Apostles gave to their ministering brethren the right hand of fellowship, when appointed to their special departments of evangelical labor, have holden up an inducement to the same practice from that day to the present. On this solemn occasion, we are to follow the laudable example. Therefore, as the organ of this installing council, reverend, respected and beloved brother, I affectionately present and beg you to accept this right hand ; and permit me to say that I cordially offer this testimonial of fraternal affection on behalf of these ministering brethren ; of the general convention, of which you are an acknowledged member ; of the Universal Society in Salem, to which I have the honor to minister ; and lastly, for myself as an individual. By this token, be assured that the council, united with you in your faith and labor of the gospel, rejoice in your present establishment, as a larger sphere of duty and pleasure, where your gifts may be improved to increasing numbers of believers. That, the general convention, impressed with a sense of your usefulness, as a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, which they have known from an acquaintance with your studious habits, experimental knowledge and love of the truth, bear you upon their hearts and will use all exertions for your spiritual welfare, strength and improvement. Your Christian brethren, composing the field of my special labors, have often profited by your administrations ; they rejoice that their immediate pastor will have so near him a co-worker to animate his heart and strengthen his hands. It has been my happy lot, my brother, ever since my first acquaintance and connection with you, to be a gainer by your conversation, and often have I been edified by your public labors and private communications. It is a service, very grateful to my feelings, to express in this manner, my fellowship with you in the spirit, while I offer a testimony of the union of the associated churches, with you in faith.

As the ministers of Christ we promise to render you all,

the assistance in our power ; to do our utmost for your greater usefulness among your brethren and your own enlargement of mind and growth in grace ; for in these exertions, my brother, we doubt not as the satisfaction is mutual, so will be the benefit which results from such endeavours. In all trials, that may attend your path, we shall consider it our duty to bear a part. We shall rejoice in your prosperity and public success, as in our own ; for the cause of truth is one, and its teachers should be one also, in faith, in practice, in sorrow and joy. Friendship to you, the love of your people, and the utility of exercising the variety of gifts will dictate, when convenient, those pleasing exchanges which in various ways are beneficial to the hearers of the word ; and when proximity of situation, or necessary journeyings in your vicinity shall admit, such exchanges will be considered as objects of moral importance. And now, brother, our prayers are that the Great Shepherd of the sheep would ever go before you and make your way prosperous ; that amidst the revilings of men, the calumnies of the ignorant and the scoffings of sinners, your bow may abide in strength. May your public labors be blessed of God to the conversion, instruction and edification of many ; and your private conversation in times of sorrow or joy, sickness or health, life or death, be improving, salutary, comforting and instructive. Under your administrations, may the dear people of your charge flourish like a watered garden. God grant, that within these walls hoary age may often worship, leaning upon the staff of promise, and tender youth grow up as reeds by the brooks and willows by the water courses ; and even early infancy lisp Hosannas to the son of David. And when this earthly course shall be finished, may you my brother, with the flock of your charge, grown into a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, receive the promised inheritance of eternal life, in the Sheepfold of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls. **AMEN.**

NOTE.—The delivery of the scriptures and charge, to the Rev. **ABNER KNEELAND**, by the Rev. **THOMAS JONES**, at his reinstallation in and over the First Universal Society in Charlestown, Mass. not having been received in season for the second number of the Gospel Visitant ; must serve our readers as an apology for its appearance in this, together with the Fellowship of the Churches, by the Rev. **EDWARD TURNER** ; both of which, should have followed the discourse delivered on the occasion, by the Rev. **HOSEA BALLOU**, published in our last number.

My Dear Christian Friend and Brother.

THE subject of our friendly conversation yesterday, is perpetually revolving in my mind, and its importance as continually magnifying.

This is not because the subject is new, nor is it because I have not heretofore spent much time and study to make myself acquainted with the general tenour of the written testimony on it: but the way in which you and your brethren in the ministry of your particular order, understand and communicate this subject, as stated by you yesterday, makes it evident to my mind, that an investigation of so weighty a subject, in a friendly way and with a christian spirit, may tend to the manifestation of divine truth and to the honor of the redeemer. I would further state, that the impressions on my mind which urge me to make this communication are not from any desire to perplex your mind with unnecessary queries; but, if I am not deceived, these impressions are of a truly religious nature, presenting as an ultimate motive, the advancement of the knowledge of salvation to the honor of the Saviour and the peace and harmony of his sincere disciples.

The subject to which I allude is that of *atonement*, on which we had a short conference as we walked in christian friendship yesterday.

Your statement of this momentuous point of gospel doctrine was as follows. "I believe in *Universal Atonement*, but not in *Universal Salvation*." I endeavoured to turn your attention immediately to explain the difference between atonement and salvation, after I had obtained your consent that *atonement* and *reconciliation* are synonymous. As our opportunity was short, however explicit your remarks might appear to you, I collected nothing definite on the subject; therefore pressed the invitation which through your goodness, procured me a promise of a conference on the same subject this day, if you did not leave town. As I conceived it quite uncertain whether I should have the pleasure of the wished for conference, I was induced to improve the earliest hours of my study this day, in arranging the following enquiry into the merits of the general subject, that

in case you leave town without calling, I may send these researches in an epistle to my friend and fellow servant in the ministry of reconciliation.

I shall direct this investigation, to make the following particulars evident.

1st. That you are right in granting that atonement and reconciliation are synonymous.

2d. That you are right in the statement that atonement is universal as a scripture doctrine. But,

3d. That you are not correct in disallowing salvation to be as universal as atonement or reconciliation,

1st. As synonymous terms with atonement and reconciliation, I will add, *Propitiation* and *Ransom*. These four words are undoubtedly of similar signification in scripture, as will appear from the following quotations. Lev. 6, 7. "And the Priest shall make an *atonement* for him before the Lord ; and it shall be forgiven, for any thing of all that he hath done, in trespassing therein." 16, 34. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an *atonement* for the children of Israel, for all their sins once a year." 8, 15. "And he slew it, and Moses took the blood and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar and sanctified it, to make *reconciliation* upon it." II. Chron. 29, 24. "And the Priests killed them, and they made *reconciliation* with their blood upon the altar, to make an *atonement* for all Israel." Ezekiel 45, 15. "And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel, for a meat offering and for a burnt offering, for peace offerings, to make *reconciliation* for them, saith the Lord." Lev. 23, 27. "Also, on the tenth day of this seventh month shall be a day of *atonement*." Heb. 2, 17. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make *reconciliation* for the sins of the people." I John 2, 1. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the *propitiation* for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Mat. 10, 28. "Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a

ransom for many." I Tim. 2, 6. "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The foregoing quotations, though but a few of the many which might be adduced, are undoubtedly, sufficient to show that these four words are applied to the same subject, and that no material difference is observable in them.

That the general subject may appear still more evident, I will here add the word *redemption* as synonymous with the four preceding words. The scriptures which show that this word is similar in its use with the others, are the following, Heb. 9, 12. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal *redemption* for us." Verse 15. "And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the *redemption* of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Rom. 3, 23, 24. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the *redemption*, that is in Christ Jesus."

2d. I proceed to show that you are scripturally correct in believing in the *Universality of atonement, reconciliation, propitiation, ransom, redemption*. The proof of this proposition rests on the validity of scriptures already quoted.

The Apostle John, says, as we have seen, "If any man sin we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the *propitiation* for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." St. Paul says, that the one mediator gave himself a *ransom* for all to be testified in due time." To the Hebrews he says, "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of death, now crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." Col. 1, 19, 20, "For it pleased the father, that in him all fulness should dwell, and (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to *reconcile all things* unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." II. Cor. 5, 19. "God was in Christ *reconciling* the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." These and many more scriptures make it so evident that Atonement by Christ is Universal, that there is no way to account for the contrary sentiment in our

opposers, only, that they find it necessary to shut their eyes against this part of the word of God. Those who, pursuant to that unaccountable tradition of Christ's dying to redeem a small elect only out of the whole family of man deny the Universality of Atonement, never appear willing to meet you on the plain literal testimony of scripture, when reasoning on this point. They are obliged to say that the word *all* does not mean the *whole*, or they will turn you off by shifting the subject. But the plain fact, after all the vain twists and turns made by the craftiness of deceivers, is this, the mediator, who gave himself a ransom for *all*, is the propitiation for the *sins of the whole world*. And there is no more excuse for denying this fact, than there is for denying Christ wholly. As the word of God expresses that Jesus, by God's grace, tasted death for every man, to say there is one for whom he did not taste of death, is to deny the word of God as directly as to say that he did not taste death for any. I have no doubt, dear brother, but this proposition is as evident to your mind as it is to mine, and you have marvelled a thousand times why it should be so, that any who at all believe in Christ, should deny what is so plainly declared in God's word. I have marvelled too, and still marvel at the force of tradition. But, sir, while we see motes in our brother's eye, may it not be, that beams are in ours? I proceed,

3dly. To show that you are not correct in disallowing salvation to be as universal as atonement or reconciliation.

Here I wish to bring your mind directly to the query which I stated in conversation. What is the difference between *Reconciliation* and *Salvation*? How can you manage this question? Let us reduce the query to an individual. Can one single person be *reconciled* to God and not be *saved* in the sense of scripture? "Thou shalt call his name *Jesus* for he shall *save* his people from their *sins*." What difference is there between being *reconciled* and being *saved* from *sin*? Is not sin all the unreconciliation there is in man?

Here, dear sir, is as plain a fact, and as destitute of ambiguity as any subject of human contemplation. All I ask of you, is, not to do in this case, as I observed our opposers do in the other case, (*viz.*) Shut your eyes against this part of the word of God. Lift your desires to God, that you may examine this subject unembarrassed by prepossessions.

Let us search for the object of atonement, as declared in the word of truth. See Rom. 5, 18. "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Can you, sir, believe that any man can be *justified unto life* by the righteousness of Christ, and not be saved from sin? See also the passage in Rom. 3, 23, 24, which I have already quoted to show the use of the word *redemption*. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being *justified* freely by his grace, through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus." I am confident that you will not contend that any who are thus justified freely by grace will fail of salvation. See Rom. 8, 30. "And whom he *justified* them he also *glorified*." Look at the word *Salvation*. See Isaiah 52, 10. "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and *all the ends of the earth* shall see the *salvation* of God." St. Luke 3, 6. "And *all flesh* shall see the *salvation* of God." I Tim. 2, 4. "Who will have all men to be *saved*, and come unto the knowledge of the truth." Can those scriptures be broken? Or must they be understood differently from what they say? You very justly contend that atonement is Universal, because the scriptures so declare it, in positive terms. You marvel at the professed Christian who denies this fact; but I now call on you to consider if you do not justify those who deny the universality of Atonement, by disallowing the natural force of the word, when you do the same thing yourself when you cannot avoid universal salvation in any other way.

And what is it, dear brother, that drives you to such shifts? Do you think it an honor to our blessed Saviour to have millions for whom he died remain in sin and rebellion against him eternally? You cannot believe thus. Have you the least desire that even one of your fellow creatures should miss of salvation? This cannot be. Tell me, sir, if you can account for your denying universal salvation, in any other way, than you account for the conduct of our brethren of a different persuasion, who deny the universality of atonement?

I trust that you will, by no means surmise that I make this communication to you from unfriendly motives, for I assure you that I feel nothing unfriendly towards you, or

any order of professors in the world. My sincere prayer to God is, that we may be brought to see eye to eye and rejoice in the return of the captivity of Zion. I wish to hold myself open to conviction as I have no interest to support, by arguing falsely. I shall be happy to receive whatever you may be pleased to communicate in return for this in the spirit of love and friendship; and if I need rebuke, let the righteous smite me and it shall be an excellent oil.

Yours in faithfulness.



AN ATTEMPT TO ILLUSTRATE THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION, AS STATED BY ST. PAUL TO THE ROMANS.

ON account of the very different views, entertained by christian people, in relation to the doctrine which we are about to consider, this attempt seems not altogether unnecessary. It also being evident, that a spirit of general inquiry, into the nature of those subjects which relate to the spiritual concerns of mankind, is now moving the minds of the different denominations of Christians among us, it is therefore conceived expedient, that those scriptures, about which much has been written rather calculated to obscure the truth of gospel grace and salvation, than to manifest those things in which the happiness of man is so deeply interested, should be so clearly illustrated that the honest inquirer after truth may find it easy to obtain the object of his inquiry. We would not wish to suggest, however, that the scriptures under consideration are inexplicit, or that what may here be presented to the public, can in the least claim the merit of making this scripture doctrine of election more easy to be understood than it is already rendered in the writings of St. Paul, were it not for the injudicious method by which too many deceive themselves on this subject, which is done by framing a system of doctrine by the help of a few detached passages taken from the general theme of the Apostle and dissociated from every thing with which that divine author connected them.

That doctrine which is distinguished among Christians by the name of *the doctrine of election*, is conceived to be so dissonant to the spirit of the christian charities, that those who consider themselves established on the *general calls and invitations of the gospel*, view the doctrine of election as a dangerous heresy. On the other hand, those who having committed the error of deceiving themselves as above noticed, have modified the doctrine of election in such a way that it is impossible for them to make use of general invitations without involving the absurdity of an invitation where he who gives the invitation, not only wills that it should not be complied with, but fore-ordains such means as will unavoidably prevent compliance.

It would undoubtedly be unnecessary to proceed to show all the unreasonable and contradictory notions, which have been imbibed as necessarily connected with the main error, which having been mistaken in the way above pointed out, was immediately nursed to an extensive degree, by the natural partiality of the human heart, which is found so congenial with all false opinions. All those false opinions must share the fate of the main error, on which they are built, and by laying the axe at the root of the tree, not only the trunk, but all its numerous branches come to the ground together. In doing this, we propose the following method.

1st. State the main error and connect with it the detached passages from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans by which this error is supposed to be supported. And

2nd. Show by the connection in which those passages are found, that the Apostle designed them for a very different purpose.—

1st. The main error is stated as follows.

God the creator of all things and sole disposer of all creatures, did from all eternity, elect some of the human family to everlasting life in the enjoyment of himself: and did predestinate the rest as vessels of wrath, to endure inconceivable torments to all eternity in sin and rebellion against him.

The portion of detached scripture on which the above sentiment is founded are the following. See Rom. 9, 11, 12, 13. (For the Children, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the young-

er. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Verses 15, 16, 17, 18. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for the same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared through all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom we will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" Verses 21, 22, 23, 24. "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour; What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had aforetime prepared unto glory; even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Chap. 11, 5—10 "Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway." As it is evident that the Apostle, in the foregoing scriptures, represents Esau, Pharaoh, the house of Israel, except seven thousand, who were chosen men, in the days of Elias, and the whole house of Israel in the Apostle's day, except a covenant according to the election of grace, in a similar situation, it has been believed agreeably to the above statement of the doctrine of election that Esau, Pharaoh and the house of Israel as above noticed, were predestinated, from all eternity, to never ending woe and misery. While on the other hand but a remnant were chosen of God as vessels of eternal, never ending glory.

Now that St. Paul never designed the thread of his argument, from which those scriptures are detached, to prove or substantiate any such idea or doctrine, we proceed 2dly to show.

This will be seen as clearly as the sun at noon day, the moment we shall have pursued the Apostle's argument to the close of the 11th chapter. See verse 11. "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall?" Whom does the Apostle ask this all important question about? Answer, the non-elect, who are pointed out in the 7th. verse as follows. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Nothing can be more evident than that the Apostle asked this question concerning those who were not elected, whose eyes were blinded according to the prayer of David, who stumbled at the stone of stumbling as noticed in the 9th. chapter, verses 31, 32. "But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at the stumbling stone." Look at the 11th chapter and 11th verse, and see how the Apostle answers this question. "God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."

The Apostle having turned his attention to speak of those who were not elected, still goes on with his query, see verse 12. "Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" Whose fulness? Those blinded, fallen Israelites, through whose fall Salvation came to the Gentiles.

What is the natural force of the Apostle's argument in this case? Answer. If the world of Gentiles were made rich through the fall and the diminishing of blinded Israel, it shows that the fulness of the riches of blinded Israel will be much more than the riches of the Gentiles. The nature of this argument is repeated in the 15th verse. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" The Apostle still pursuing his argument, goes on to show under the similitude of the first fruits and the root, the lump and the branches, the moral relation in which fallen Israel stood to Christ.

See verse 16th and onward. "For if the first fruits be holy the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." Here the reader will do well to notice that the Apostle shows that the believing Gentiles were liable to as great a fall by unbelief, as had happened to the Jews, and that the blinded Jews might by faith be restored from their fall. See the subject continued. "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shall be cut off. And they also if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again." This is plain talk. The Apostle goes on to show the abundant reasonableness of his argument in respect to the recovery of those who had fallen through unbelief. See the subject continued. "For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery; (lest you should be wise in your own conceits,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved;" (Here notice, that the Apostle cannot mean less by "ALL ISRAEL" than all those to whom blindness had happened, and all those who, as the elect, had obtained the righteousness of faith. He goes on to strengthen his argument in its ample form as follows,) "as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." The Apostle touches again on what he has before clearly expressed (viz.) that the salvation of the Gospel had reached the Gentiles

though the blindness fall and enmity of blinded Israel, and show that all this was necessary that Israel might finally obtain mercy through the mercy before communicated to the Gentiles through their blindness. See the subject still continued. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes : but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief ; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Here the Apostle Paul closes one of the most sublime and important arguments on which his divinely inspired mind ever dwelt, and he closes it in an extacy suited to the dignity of the subject. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? Or who hath been his counsellor ? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompenced unto him again ? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things ; to whom be glory forever. Amen."

Though we can entertain no doubt but the subject, under the foregoing arrangement, will appear plain to every impartial reader, and that the mind will naturally be struck with the impropriety of detaching from the thread of the Apostle's argument, those passages for the use to which they have generally been devoted, yet there are, in such close connection with the arguments which we have noticed from the Apostle, several important subjects which we think it necessary to illustrate.

1st. As has been noticed, it is evident that the Apostle represented Esau, Pharaoh, and the house of Israel in several ages of the Jewish Church in a similar situation, and that this circumstance has led those, who having unfortunately mistaken the Apostle, to believe that Esau, Pharaoh, and the house of Israel, in general, in those several ages of that Church, will be endlessly excluded from the Salvation of the Gospel according to an eternal purpose of God. And we here acknowledge that had the Apostle finally, in the conclusion of his argument, in the 11th Chapter to the Romans,

landed those Jews of his day in endless perdition according to an eternal purpose of God, his argument ought, in justice, to be applied to Esau, Pharoah and the house of Israel in the then past ages of the Church, with equal force as to those blinded fallen Jews of his day. But as we have already clearly seen that the Apostle directs the whole force of his argument in the 11th Chapter to the Romans, to prove that those blinded, fallen Israelites will finally be restored through the mercy of the Gentile Church, this argument ought, in justice to be applied with equal force to Esau, Pharoah and the house of Israel in the past ages of that Church, as to those Jews who in the Apostle's day, were broken off from their own olive-tree, whom he says, God is able to graff in again. The form which the Apostle gives this argument is the following. See verse 12, of the 11th Chapter—"Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" This argument we apply to Esau. It was through the fall of Esau that Jacob obtained the birthright and the blessing, and if so, how much more Esau's fulness? See the account in Genesis 27, 35—40. "And he said, thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, is not he rightly named Jacob? For he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?" Notice this question and see the event. "And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, behold, I have made him thy Lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I now do unto thee, my son?" Observe the tender language of Isaac in which he acknowledges his son, and listen to the fallen diminished Esau's expostulation with his father. "And Esau said unto his father, hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless we, even me also, O my father! And Esau lifted up his voice and wept."

What does Isaac the father do, in this case, which seems sufficient to move the heart of a stone? Does he say, No, my son, I have but one blessing and that I have granted to your brother, therefore you are reprobated forever! Such an answer would comport very well with modern notions of

election and reprobation, but Isaac answered in a very different manner. "And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother." Notice what follows. "And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt brake his yoke from off thy neck." See again, in the 32d and 33d chapters of Genesis where Jacob acknowledges Esau to be his Lord. Notice first the presents which Jacob sends before him to his brother. Chap. 32, 14, &c. "Two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she-asses, and ten foals. And he divided them into the hands of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, pass over before me, and put a span betwixt drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost, saying, when Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, whose art thou? And whether goest thou? And whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, they be thy SERVANT JACOB's; it is a present sent unto my Lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us. And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, on this manner shall ye speak unto Esau when you find him. And say ye, moreover, behold, THY SERVANT JACOB is behind us." See again Chap. 33, 1, &c. where Jacob with all his family prostrate themselves before Esau and find favor in his sight. "And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindmost." This was a circumstance which tried Jacob's soul. All which he held dear to him, he viewed at the mercy of an injured brother, whom he supposed, incensed against him with just vengeance. And he did, in this case, as it is natural for men to do. In the first place, he offered his flocks and herds; secondly; lest these should fail to appease the wrath which he dreaded, he presents his handmaids and the children they had borne him, that if Esau should destroy them, he might make his escape

with his two wives and their children. But 3dly. Leah and her children are placed next to the handmaids, and Rachel the beloved, with Joseph is kept in what was supposed to be the greatest security.

Every circumstance thus newly arranged, the Patriarch Jacob now takes his life in his hand, and passed over before his numerous family, "and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him." But did he run to destroy? Did he meet his brother with wrath seeking for vengeance? No, he "embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him : and they wept." Now observe, those whom Jacob supposed were in the greatest danger, were the first to witness the favour of Esau. "And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children, and said, who are those with thee? And he said, the children which God hath graciously given **THY SERVANT**. Then the hand-maidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves : and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves. And he said, these are to find grace in the sight of **MY LORD**. And Esau said, I **HAVE ENOUGH**, my brother ; keep that thou hast unto thyself. And Jacob said, nay, I pray thee : if now I found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand : for therefore I have seen **THY FACE**, as though I had seen the **FACE OF GOD**, and thou wast pleased with me." We here ask, according to this scripture account of these two brothers, which discovers the best character, or appears to be most favoured? It is evident that the fullness of him who forgave his brother was greater, or much more than his, who needed forgiveness.

If the Apostle has so disposed his argument that it justly applies to Pharaoh, and the house of Israel in the past ages of that Church, we conceive it proper to allow it all its natural force, for God is able to fulfil the counsels of his will. And if the fall of Pharaoh was necessary to the deliverance of the children of Israel, from a strange land, into the promised inheritance, God is as able to recover Pharaoh as he is to graff that part of Israel who were broken off through unbelief, into their own olive-tree. And so likewise of the whole house of Israel in all different ages, the receiving of them shall be life from the dead. That as it is written, 'In

the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

2dly. We conceive that an examination of those detached scriptures, by which, the before stated error is supposed to be supported, may be of use to the reader. But on account of what has been said in our last section, it may be proper to reduce this examination to a single point; which to do, we look at the particular cause of the fall and casting away of that part of Israel who were broken off from their own olive-tree.

This question is answered in the words of the Apostle which follows. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest are blinded unto this day." This blindness was according to David's prayer. "Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see." Now it is evident that if these people had not been **BLINDED**, they would have obtained what they sought for, as well as those who were elected. And it is likewise evident that what they sought for, was the same thing which the election obtained. But for the sake of the case, suppose the doctrine of election and reprobation, as stated in the fore-part of this attempt, be true, what would those reprobates have obtained if they had not been blinded? Again, the Apostle says, "Because of unbelief they were broken off." Unbelief in what? Was it because they did not believe in their own eternal reprobation to endless misery? Would they have continued in their own olive-tree, which is Christ, if they had believed that they were excluded from his grace forever, by an unalterable decree of God, from all eternity? These queries, brought in this form, show as plainly, as any thing can be shown, that the idea that those blinded Jews were predestinated to endless misery, is contrary to the very scripture on which the idea is founded.

3dly. It is of importance that the reader understands what the Apostle means by the following words. "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." This will be understood the moment the reader observes, that had it not been for the unbelief of the Jews, they would not have fulfilled the scriptures in con-

demning Christ; and if the scriptures had not been fulfilled, the Gentiles could never have been brought to believe in them.

On the other hand, it is evident according to the Apostle's argument that the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, depends on the coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles. So that through the mercy obtained by the Gentiles, through the unbelief of the Jews, the Jews will at last obtain mercy.

4thly. It will be for the serious enquirer after truth, to compare these arguments, fairly drawn from the Apostle's statements which we now see concentrating in the Salvation of all who have sinned, with the arguments of the same Apostle in the chapters which precede those which we have examined.

On a careful examination of the two first chapters and the forepart of the 3d it is evident that the Apostle labours to show that all mankind are in the same situation of sin. See the 1st verse of the 2nd chapter. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Verse 12. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law." Chap. 3, verses 9, 10. "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, there is none righteous, no not one."

As soon as the Apostle concludes this subject, he brings the great truth, for which he was labouring, to our sight, in the following words. See verses 23, 24. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." In this last quotation we find that St. Paul believed that all mankind were sinners, and that all mankind were justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This idea of Universal Justification, he labours at large in his 5th chapter, pursuant to the conclusion of the 4th which is in these words. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." These arguments in the 5th chapter are brought to a close as follows. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by

the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound : but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound : that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The Apostle well knowing that the opposer would not fail to cavail where there was the least apparent occasion, saves the objector the trouble of bringing as an objection to the foregoing testimony, that we may then as well continue in sin as not, and even better, so that grace may still abound, by stating and answering the query himself. See the beginning of the 6th chapter. "What shall we say then ? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound ? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein." The Apostle then goes on with a most beautiful argument to show the impropriety of continuing in sin, urging in the 14th verse as follows. "For sin shall not have dominion over you ; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Here he guards against the vain cavails of unreasonable men, by stating the following query with his answer. See verses 15, 16. "What then ? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace ? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey ; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness ?" His argument in this chapter is closed as follows. "For the wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the 7th chapter is shown the works of the flesh under the law, and the wretchedness of man under that condemnation, and his only remedy which is Christ our Lord.

In the 8th chapter is discovered the perfect righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Passing on the Apostle shows the whole creation groaning and travailling in pain together, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. These subjects are just touched upon so as to lead the mind of the reader to form some idea of the consistancy of the Apostle's arguments through the general subject on which

we have been labouring. The reader can easily see that if St. Paul had believed in the doctrine of eternal retribution on the principle of eternal reprobation from all past eternity, that he never would have laboured to establish the doctrine of universal justification through Christ. But if his real belief was that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and that all were justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, his argument as closed in the 11th chapter is perfectly consistent with his real belief.

5thly. A correct knowledge of the scripture idea of election will serve as a powerful corroborative evidence evin-
sive of the truths brought to light in the Apostle's argument in the 11th chapter. The scripture idea of election, we suggest, is this. "Whom God elects, is elected for the benefit of those who are not elected." This idea is according to the use of election among men in society. No community, enjoying the rights of suffrage, ever elected a set of men to enjoy all the immunities and privileges of the commonwealth to the exclusion of their constituents. But men are chosen, or elected for the purpose of serving the public, for the discharge of which duty, their sacred honours are pledged.

The most important election recorded in the scriptures, we have an account of in the 42d chapter of Isaiah, verse 1st. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." See verses 6, 7. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." In these passages a very full account is given of the design of this election, and it is exactly what we suggested; the elect was elected for the benefit of those who were not elected.

This same elect is spoken of by St. Peter in his first Epistle, 2d chapter, 6th verse, alluding to a passage in the 28th of Isaiah, as follows. "Wherefore also it is contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

The stone which is elected for the chief corner stone in a building, is elected to support, in the building those stones which are not elected for the chief corner stone. The building raised on this corner stone is noticed by St. Paul to the Ephesians. See chap. 2, 19—22, "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit."

2dly. The Apostles of Christ were elected or chosen of him, and it is evident that they were chosen for the benefit of those who were not chosen to be Apostles. Out of many passages which might be quoted as proof in this case we here insert the following from St. Peter's sermon to Cornelius. See Acts 10, 39—43. "And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew, and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. To him gave all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

3dly. The primitive church of believers, who were converted to christianity, through the labours of the Apostles, were chosen of God, as the first fruits of corn, oil and wine were under the law. See 2d Thess. 13. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." James 1, 18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." Rev. 14, 4. "These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb." These were chosen of God as the first fruits of his creatures; and if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy. And that those who believed on Christ through the word of faith preached by the Apostles, were thereunto chosen of God for the benefit of the rest of the

world may be seen by the words of Christ in the 17th of John. See verse 20, 21. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Should the foregoing have the happy effect, on any inquiring mind, to remove any doubts respecting the goodness of our heavenly father towards the fulness of his rational offspring, such an effect would be more than worthy of these feeble labours. But trusting in the divine favour of him, who hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, we submit the subject to the reader's candid examination.



AN ATTEMPT TO ILLUSTRATE THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS, IN COMPLIANCE WITH A REQUEST FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

- I. The subject of the flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Gen. 3, 24.
- II. The subject of the two Olive-branches. Zech. 4, 11—14, and the two witnesses. Rev. 11, 3—12.
- III. The resurrection of the dead.
- IV. The second death.
- V. Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison. 1 Peter 3, 19, 20.
- VI. The time commonly called the Millenium.

Dear brother in Christ, having informed you, in my reply to your Epistle of October 16, 1811. That I conceived the six subjects, on which you wished to obtain my opinion, were of such importance, and so extensive that the bounds of a letter were too limited to admit of doing justice to your queries in such a mode of communication; and having likewise suggested that I was disposed to attend to those subjects in the 3d No. of the GOSPEL VISITANT, I have now set about the work, in hopes of increasing my small

stock of divine knowledge and of contributing something to the edification if not to the instruction, of not only you my particular friend and brother, but to many others who read this Number.

I must be permitted, before I enter on a disquisition of the subjects introduced, to observe, that I feel, very sensibly, the weight of my inadequateness to the undertaking before me, but as I intend to travail no other path than such as the word of God directs me in, I hope, by no means, to make the truth more obscure to any inquiring mind.

1. In illustrating the subject of the flaming sword, it will be necessary to consider several particulars relative to the situation in which man was first placed, after he was formed of the dust of the ground, and of the effects of sin, in his mind, after transgression. If the garden which God planted eastward in Eden, into which he put Adam, as noted in Gen. 2, 8, be considered a literal garden, then, that the whole account may stand in a rational analogy, it will be necessary to allow that the tree of life, which was in the midst of the garden was a literal tree, also that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a literal tree. These notions being allowed, it is reasonable to suppose that the flaming sword was a literal one. It is conceived however, that it may be more consistent with scripture to understand the garden to signify the moral state in which man was placed, by his creator, prior to transgression. The tree of life was, no doubt, then what it is now, which we may understand by the following scriptures. St. John, 6, 48. "I am that bread of life." Verse 33. "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Verse 51. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." 1. Cor. 10, 16, 17. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." Rev. 2, 7. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Chap. 22, 1, 2. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal,

Here, if I do not fail for want of proper skill in arranging the divine word, it is hoped will be seen what Moses meant by the woman's falling in with the serpent's temptation. The serpent signifies wisdom. And as we have seen two laws, we will now look for two serpents and two wisdoms. When Moses and Aaron stood before Pharaoh, by the command of God, as they were commanded, "Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants; and it became a serpent." Exodus 7, 10. By this ROD is represented divine POWER, and by this SERPENT is signified divine WISDOM. When Pharaoh saw this sign of the power and wisdom of the God of the Israelites, he called on his Magicians who cast down their rods, which also became serpents. These rods turned to serpents signify the power and wisdom of the earthly nature. The superiority of the power and wisdom of God, over the power and wisdom of the flesh, is represented by Aaron's rod's swallowing up the Magician's rods. See Num. 21, 8, 9. "And the Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent, and sit it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." It may be proper to observe those fiery serpents were all of the same nature, they were but one in nature, which represents the wisdom of the flesh, while the serpent of brass represents Christ or the wisdom of God. James 3, 15, 16, 17. "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." 1 Cor. 2, 6. "Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world." Having obtained a clear idea of these two wisdoms, it may not be deemed improper to suggest, that as there is revealed in the scriptures, but one tree of life, but one bread of life, and but one divine wisdom; so there is but one tree whose fruit produces death and but one wisdom of the earthly nature.

Hence it is reasonable to conclude that the serpent, who

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beguiled the woman, was the wisdom of this world which cometh to nought, and is in all ages the same, though it act in a thousand different forms, it rises from sensual appetites and administers death. To this agrees the short but comprehensive history of temptation, sin and death which we have in the Epistle of James 1, 13, 14, 15. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every-man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." The curse pronounced on the serpent is truly characteristic of the wisdom of the flesh.

"Thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field." This part of the curse is plainly demonstrated by the more wretched state to which mankind are drawn or led by carnal wisdom, than any of the beasts of the field suffer in consequence of following natural instinct. "On thy belly shalt thou go." The wisdom of the fleshly nature never goes but where carnal appetites lead. "And dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." This shows that the wisdom of which we speak, is nourished and fed wholly by earthly vanities, and that it will exist no longer than earthly things remain for his support." See Isaiah, 65, 25. "And dust shalt be the serpent's meat." "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The law of the carnal mind is enmity against the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, is not subject to it, neither in deed can be. "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Christ was bruised for our iniquities, and all mankind through the members of Christ's body, are bruised while in the flesh, by the serpent, the wisdom of this world; but Christ with the law of the spirit of life will finally conquer and bruise this satan under our feet. If we may suppose we have traveled thus far consistently with the scriptures, we may conceive that man's being drawn out of the garden, was his being deprived of that innocence in which he stood prior to transgression.

The cherubims and the flaming sword may be known by their use, which was to guard the tree of life, to prevent man from putting forth his hand and partaking of it, whereby he might live forever. These cherubims held but one

sword which flaming sword is the glorious ministration of death, of which St. Paul speaks in 2. Cor. 3, 6 and 7. The cherubims who hold and minister this flaming sword are the law and the Prophets. But why may not man be permitted to put forth his hand and take of the tree of life and eat and live forever? Answer. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." "Now we know, that what things soever the law saith; it saith to, them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3, 19, 20. But here let us cautiously inquire how the law which is holy and the commandment which is holy should be a ministration of death? Answer, it is so only in the letter, in the spirit it is life. See 2: Cor. 3, 6. "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." St. Paul took much pains in his Epistle to the Romans to make a proper distinction in respect to the spirit of the law and the letter. In the fore part of the 7th chapter he labours to show that we are delivered from the law, dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another. But in the 12th verse he says, "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good." Now the Apostle could not mean that we are delivered, by the body of Christ, from that which is holy, just and good, for the righteousness of this law which he says is spiritual in the 14th verse, he shows to be fulfilled in us in the 8th chap. 3, 4. "For what the law would not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." The 6th verse of the 7th chapter makes the matter plain. "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in NEWNESS of SPIRIT, and not in the OLDNESS of the LETTER."

I have been the more particular in tracing the distinction which the Apostle makes between the spirit and letter of the law, not only that I might show that the law never required the endless destruction of man, or was a ministration

tion of death only in the letter, but more particularly that I might introduce the cherubims or the law and the prophets where they may be seen without a flaming sword or ministration of death.

That St. Paul did not believe in the endless continuance of the ministration of death and condemnation, may be seen in much of his writings, particularly in 2d Cor. 3, 7—11. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

The same spirit of divine inspiration which moved Moses to write the account of the cherubims and the flaming sword which we have seen signifying the ministration of death, directed him to represent the cherubims in a different ministry. See Exodus 25, 18—22. "And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."

Here are the cherubims, but no flaming sword; they are over the mercy-seat with out stretched wings; they look one toward another to show their agreement in the ministration of life and mercy; their extended wings show that

there is life in them and that they are ever ready to fly abroad with the tidings of mercy. By the above passage from Exodus, we learn that all things which God gave to Moses in commandment to the children of Israel were brought into the ministration from the mercy-seat from between the cherubims. Thus the commandment was ordained unto life as St. Paul acknowledges in Rom. 7, 10. "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." How could the commandment which was ordained unto life, be found to be unto death? See the answer in verse 11. "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment deceived me; and by it slew me." And in the 12th verse he acknowledges that the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. And to make his subject as plain as possible he asks in the 13th verse this question, "Was then that which is good made death unto me"? And answers it thus. God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

Of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Horace Ballou

EXTRACT FROM AN ANTIENT WRITER ON UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

THE Apostle Paul exhorting to prayers for all men, urgeth and backs his exhortation upon this ground, that this is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. 1. Tim. 2, 3.

The letter of this text is full and express, God will have all men to be saved, and should we press it, there are almost as many arguments as words in it. For

1. It is not said he would have all men to be saved, by his good-will, but he will have all men to be saved, it is a will of authority and sovereignty, of supreme sovereignty.

2. It is an eminent, permanent, a fixed, a determinate act of his will, not transient nor revocable, he will have all men to be saved.

3. He so wills the end as withal he wills all necessary means leading to it, he will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. There is no man is or can be sanctified or saved without the knowledge of the truth, God wills therefore that they be saved, and that this means of salvation shall pass upon them.

4. This will hath its ground in the property of Gods nature, this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. Thence it derives itself, where these words our Saviour are not to be restrained to the elect, for that would not carry forth a will to save all men; this therefore is to be taken in the same latitude and extent with other places where he is called the Saviour of all men. Chap. 4, 10. And God that quickeneth all things. Chap. 6, 13. And our Saviour tells us, all things live to God. Luke 20, 38. And he is called the God of all spirits of all Flesh. Numb. 16, 22. And mark you, who is this Saviour? It is God, not only Christ, for of him he speaketh distinctly afterwards, But the God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Upon this account he said this office of praying for all men, is acceptable before God our Saviour, which is not meant of a simple acceptation, as every good work is acceptable but by way of eminence, this compared with other good works is singularly, eminently, peculiarly acceptable. Now things are so said to be acceptable to men when they suit their inclinations, and gratify their design that they are intent upon, and fall in with it: So doth this office of praying for and seeking the good, the spiritual good the eternal good of all men. It falls in with Gods great design, and tends to bring it forth into effect. When Job prayed for his friends, that had been very harsh upon him, God took it so well that he turned Jobs captivity upon it, though God was purposed to restore Job, yet he takes the very nick of that time to do it, when Job prayed for his friends. I know what Calvin and other expositors generally say, to invalidate this argument *de hominum generibus non singulis personis*

sermo est, afterwards upon verse, 6, of Christ giving himself a ransom for all, he said, particula universalis semper ad hominum genera referri debet non ad personas, viz. That this particle of Universality ought always to be understood of all ranks or sort of men, not of all Individuals ; but giving no reason for it but his own Judgment, or Ipse dixit, I need not further concern myself with it, yet for the honour I bear the author, I shall give my reason why I take it otherwise, which is this.

The Apostle doth not exhort to pray for the office of magistracy abstracted from the persons but for the persons of rulers at that time, whether Nero, or any other as bad men as the world had any (so much worse as they were obliged by him whom they represented to have been better ;) these persons of men are the objects designed upon and recommend to the prayers of the churches ; and on occasion thereof is the will of God produced. But now the reason holds for all men, as well as for these, these being as bad as any, and the very words of the text so carry the intentions : it is under the title of man, that kings must claim the benefit of this recommendation to the prayers of the church for all men, and they come in the crowd of all men in Gods willing their salvation as all, verse 4, and which all men he will have saved.

Now if God wills the salvation of Nero, and his subordinate ministers which might be as bad as he, who besides the common sins of inferiour men, abuse the eminency in which they were placed of God, let us bring home the argument. God by the Apostle requires prayers to be offered up for all men, for kings and all the eminency or as the original word is for all that are uppermost, whatever their title was ; he declares he will have all men to be saved ; the instance and practice in the then present case, falls upon very notorious men as bad as any time ever afforded.

POETICAL DEPARTMENT.

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PSALM.

THE Gospel trumpet sounds
 The notes of heavenly grace,
 Salvation without bounds
 To all the human race ;
 Sinners shall live and feel forgiven,
 God's holiness shall be their heaven.

The wicked shall return,
 The prodigal relent ;
 Their hearts with love shall burn
 To'ards him Jehovah sent ;
 Their streaming eyes on him shall gaze,
 And see compassion in a blaze.

The stony heart shall melt
 The flint in liquid stream,
 By truth's impression felt
 By love's impassion'd theme,
 God's glory shall revealed be
 And every eye together see.

The mountains that impede
 Are level'd into plain,
 The valies fearful shade,
 (By rise,) no more remain,
 The way appears before our face
 In lovely aspect, pav'd with grace.

The wilderness is chang'd
 Into a fruitful field,
 And all things new arrang'd
 To God all glory yield ;
 Caught in the flame of love divine,
 We shall in brightness ever shine.

GOSPEL VISITANT.

VOL. I.

FOR MARCH, 1812.

No. 4.

THE TWO OLIVE-BRANCHES.

THE law and the prophets, which we have seen represented by two Cherubims, we shall now find represented by two olive-trees, or branches, in Zacheriah and by two witnesses in Revelations. If we may suppose that Zerubbabel stands as a figure of Christ, which is too evident to need proof, it will be easy to see the mystery of the olive-trees. In Revelations these olive-trees are called witnesses, olive-trees and candlesticks. In Zacheriah they are called the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. See Zach. iv. 2, "And behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof."

This golden candlestick is Christ, whom the prophets just before calls the BRANCH and represents him by a STONE on which there should be SEVEN EYES. These SEVEN EYES are called SEVEN LAMPS in the above quotation. In verse 10, they are called, "THE EYES OF THE LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth." These SEVEN are called the SEVEN SPIRITS of God in Rev. v. 6, "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having SEVEN HORNS AND SEVEN EYES, WHICH ARE THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD SENT FORTH INTO ALL THE EARTH." By connecting these scriptures it appears evident that Christ is this golden candlestick, in whom dwells all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, represented by the perfect number SEVEN applied to LAMPS, EYES and SPIRITS. Verse 3, "and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof." Verse 14, "These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Christ is

LORD OF ALL. See now what the two olive-trees stand by the candlestick for. According to verses 11, 12, they emptied the golden oil through golden pipes into the bowl of the candlestick. This is done by bearing witness, as they are called the **TWO WITNESSES** in Rev. xi. In the witness which they give, they testify of Jesus. When Jesus, in the presence of Peter, James and John, was transfigured on the mount, "Behold there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him." Moses stood as the representation of the Law, and Elias of the Prophets. Their making their appearance at the transfiguration of Jesus was to shew that his glory was their fulfilment. See Rev. xix. 10, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God : for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." St. Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 27, "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken ! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." In that all-important sermon which the risen Jesus preached to the two travelling brethren, he drew forth the **GOLDEN OIL** from Moses and all the Prophets as from two olive-trees. This oil burning in the golden candlestick gave the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus to the two brethren, and caused their hearts to burn within them. St. John i. 45, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." The Law and the Prophets represented by Moses and Elias are the two witnesses, (according to the foregoing scriptures and arguments,) and this will appear still more evident by the following illustration, See Rev. xi. 3, "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sack-cloth."

Commentators agree in taking the above days for years, and likewise the three days and an half noticed in the 9th verse, for three prophetic years and an half, which, reckoning three hundred and sixty days for a year, amount to the number of days noticed in the 3d verse above quoted. The forty and two months also mentioned in the 2d verse, reckoning thirty days for a month, which was the usual method of Hebrew calculation, amount to one thousand two hundred and three score days, the same as above. Also the time, times and half a time mentioned in chap. xii. 14, reckoning a time for a year, make the above three years.

and an half. Now as all these times exactly agree, it may be considered safe to conclude that the time that the Gentiles were to tread the holy city under foot, the time of the two witnesses prophecying in sackcloth, the time of their dead bodies lying in the street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, and not permitted to be put in graves and the time of the woman in the wilderness are all one and the same time, which is one thousand two hundred and sixty years. The 7th verse of the 11. Chapter possibly may be so understood as to render those times more confused. It is there said. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and shall kill them". If we understand their finishing their testimony to signify their having completed the time of their prophecying in sackcloth, it will suppose that this time closes when we have supposed it begins. But it is not necessary to understand the 7th verse in this way, but that these two witnesses have, in the face of the world, declared their testimony, which provokes the beast to make war against them. They being overcome by the beast and killed, signifies the obscurity into which the spirit of the law and the spirit of prophecy were driven by the doctrine of antichrist. Prophecying was declared to be at an end and the spirit of the law which is life was converted into death. The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which without the spirit of the law and the spirit of prophecy are a dead letter, are the two bodies of the two witnesses which are not put in graves, that is, the antichristian church has kept the letter of these Testaments, but have denied the spirit of them. And this is what is meant by their prophecying clothed with sackcloth; for this dead letter remaining on them, obscures their light. The powers ascribed to the two witnesses in the 5th and 6th verses are those which were exercised by Moses and Elias or Elijah. "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." The wonders wrought by Moses in the land of Egypt and those wrought by the Prophet Elijah are remarkably similar to those above quoted. St. James says chap. v. 17, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by

the space of three years and six months." It is worthy of notice that the time spoken of here should be the same as in Revelations before noticed. Though it seems enough has been said to satisfy the mind that we are right in our opinion of the two witnesses, yet it may be edifying to notice some more divine pictures in this mystery. The particulars related in 1 Kings xvii. are worthy of notice. It seems that Elijah banished himself from the presence of Ahab, because he had shut heaven that neither dew nor rain should come upon the earth, for which Ahab was displeased with him.

The reign of Ahab may represent the reign of the beast in Revelations, the drought in the land of Israel for the space of three years and six months, exactly suits to the time of antichrist's reign described in Revelations; and the exilement of the Prophet may signify the death of the two witnesses as we have before seen. The poor distressed widow to whom the Lord sent the Prophet, is a just figure of the woman in the 12th of Rev. who fled into the wilderness. Her son may signify Christ. His sickness which was so sore that no breath was left in him, may represent the lifeless state in which Christ has appeared through the reign of antichrist. His being restored to life and to his mother by the Prophet, represents the bringing forth of Christ in the spirit of life and glory, by the testimony of the Prophets, to the everlasting joy of Zion, who will then say of the spirit of prophecy, as the rejoicing mother said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Rev. xi. 11, 12, "And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud: and their enemies beheld them."

Perhaps the time of the fulfilment of this scripture is in the present day; tho' I think it immaterial as to fixing the precise time of the beginning of the three days and an half. The matter of fact is now very evident, that those Scriptures which according as antichrist has explained them, have been a dead letter and a ministration of death, are now, and have been for some time, rising by the spirit of God and manifesting the signs of life. As fast as this work advances, the enemies of the ministrations of life are filled with fear. And if we may judge from the exertions which are made, it is by no means improper to say

that their fear is GREAT. In obedience to a call from heaven, these two witnesses, being quickened by the spirit of life from God, ascend up to heaven in a cloud, in sight of their enemies. The CLOUD in which these two anointed ones ascend up to heaven, is the CLOUD OF WITNESSES which come forth to convince mankind of the truth of the ministration of life. The heaven to which they ascend is the sublime regions of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the power of his glory, by which the beast, or man of sin is to be consumed, as with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming.

See the 7th verse of the 10th of Rev. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." The sounding of the seventh Angel, succeeds the ascension of the two witnesses. See chap. xi. 15, "And the seventh Angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." This scene opens the mysteries of the prophets and of them who have spoken of the glory of the redeemer, which our eyes long to see, even the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, that he may reign for ever and ever.

For the encouragement of the few, who appear like a little cloud, in the testimony of the ministration of life, proclaiming; with great voices in heaven, that the kingdom of this world belong to Christ Jesus, let them remember the sudden increase of the type. See 1 Kings xviii. 44, "And it came to pass, at the seventh time, that he said, behold there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." 45, "And it came to pass, in the mean while, that the heavens were black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain."

The universal reign of Christ Jesus, brought about and effected through the instrumentality of the two witnesses as has been illustrated, very beautifully accords with the words of the blessed Saviour, recorded in Mat. xxii. 37—40, "Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

When the true spirit of the law and the prophets, as by Christ himself explained, shall have fully and completely quickened the

scriptures to the understanding of Zion's watchmen, then they will see eye to eye, and they will be the ministers of PEACE. No wrath nor condemnation will then be proclaimed for Gospel. She who hath been persecuted will come up from the wilderness, perfumed with the frankincense of those merchants who deal in the merchandize and revenue of the wisdom of God.

"He that testifieth these things, saith, surely I come quickly : Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Rose Ballou,

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

THE subject of the resurrection of the dead requires that we investigate it with great caution. The safest method is to keep close to the divine word, speculative opinions being of no profit. The mode in which the blessed Saviour managed an argument on this subject, with the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, may be revived as our example, as he confined himself to the scriptures and the power of God. His argument being sufficient to confound and put those learned opponents to silence, may by the blessing of God, give the candid inquirer divine light on the subject.

The Sadducees were disposed to rest the argument on the Scriptures, and stated a case for Christ to manage agreeably to what Moses had commanded. The case they stated was of seven brethren, who, agreeably to what Moses commanded, married one woman. Their question was, whose wife this woman should be in the resurrection ? The Saviour did not endeavour to draw the minds of his opponents from the Scriptures, but answers them as follows. See St. Mat. xxii. 29—32, "Jesus answered and said unto them, ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage ; but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The force of this argument, which completely silenced the Sadducees, is this, 1st. You acknowledge that God spake to Moses, and by Moses to the people. 2d. Notwithstanding you are believers in Moses by profession, you are ignorant of the sentiments found in his writings, and it would even seem that

you never read Moses so as to know whether he supported the doctrine of the resurrection or not. 3d. When God spake to Moses, saying, *I am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, can you reasonably suppose that there were not, at that time, such beings of God, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? You will acknowledge that it is a self-evident fact, that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

We here see that to allow the above argument to be good, we must allow Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were alive unto God, at the time when God said to Moses, *I am* the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. And also we must allow that in granting this fact, we consent to the doctrine of the resurrection as taught by Christ himself.

In the scripture where St. Luke mentions this dispute between Christ and the Sadducees, Christ concludes his answer by saying, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, **FOR ALL LIVE UNTO HIM.**" In this addition to the text quoted from Matthew, there is no other SENTIMENT expressed than what is expressed without it; it is however, more definite in the idea, that as it is with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in respect to the resurrection, so it is with all mankind. Taught of Jesus, St. Paul corroborates the above sentiment in a number of passages. See Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 9, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." It may be well to notice here, that the risen Saviour is Lord of those who are dead, as it respects this animal life, but that those who are thus dead, live unto God, in the sense which Christ argued the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a fact on which the truth of the Gospel, as preached by Christ and his Apostles, as also by the Prophets, evidently rests.

In due season Christ foretold his death and resurrection to his twelve disciples, so that when those things should take place, they might be the more prepared to believe and be confirmed in them. See Mat. xx. 17, 18, 19, "And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the

third day he shall rise again". These were things, all of which, the twelve could judge of by the power of their senses. They could certainly know when they went to Jerusalem, they knew of Christ's being betrayed by Judas to the Chief Priests and scribes, they knew that the Romans must put him to death if he was crucified, as the Jews were not allowed so much power under the Roman Government, they also knew that he was crucified. All those particulars, we may suppose, they could not have been deceived in. Now it appears reasonable to conclude that if these twelve disciples had not been as fully convinced of the resurrection of Christ, as they were of the beforementioned particulars, which Christ connected with it, in his account to them, above quoted, they never would afterwards have appeared as his disciples, vindicating his gospel and his resurrection. See St. Luke xxiv. where is given an account of the opportunity which Christ gave the disciples to satisfy them of the real fact that he was risen from the dead.

The two brethren who went to Emmaus, to whom Christ made himself known, had a lengthy conversation with him on the way, not knowing who he was. This communication consisted. 1st. Of his enquiring of them the subject of their conversation. 2d. Of their answer to him which is worthy of notice. Cleopas with surprise asks Christ if he is only a stranger in Jerusalem and has not known the things which have come to pass there in those days? By this it seems the subject of their conversation must be known to all those who dwelt in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood. Christ asks still, what things? And receives for answer a particular detail of those things concerning himself which had taken place, until the answer comes to the subject of the resurrection, and there the matter is related in an honest artless manner. The two brethren supposed that they were giving this relation to a stranger who knew nothing of the whole matter. Now if they had been dishonest men, disposed to use the craft of imposters to make this stranger believe, what they knew was false, (viz) that he who was crucified had actually risen from the dead, they would undoubtedly have stated it as a fact which they knew to be true. But this they do not do; but say that certain women, of their company, made them astonished, who were early at the sepulchre, and not finding the body, came and said that they had seen a vision of Angels, who told them that he was alive. They further add, and certain of them that were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not. It is evident that

this story was not told with a design to impose a belief of the resurrection on the mind of this, supposed, stranger ; for it does not carry the idea that those who told it fully believed that fact themselves. Nor does it carry the idea that those who went to the sepulchre and found it as the women had told them, fully believed that he had risen from the dead.

3d. Christ then proceeds, not to make himself known to them, but to expound the scriptures of Moses and all the Prophets, to show that Christ ought to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory. This shows very plainly that Moses and all the Prophets had given evidence of the death and resurrection of Christ, which shows, what I first stated, that the resurrection of Christ is a truth on which the gospel rests. As this most luminous explanation of the law of Moses and the scriptures of the Prophets was closed, which had already made such an impression on the minds of the two brethren as caused their hearts to burn within them, they drew near to the city, when Christ made as if he would have gone further, but being constrained he consented to abide with them. “ And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and break, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him ; and he vanished out of their sight.”

These two disciples surely must have known that it was the same person who sat at meat with them, break bread and blessed it, that was with them on the way, if that were the case. This shows that if they saw Jesus at meat with them at Emmaus then it was he who was with them on the way.

These disciples were acquainted with the person of Christ, and if they knew him, they knew him as an acquaintance. They had been acquainted with his manner of breaking bread and blessing it, which perhaps first struck the idea of him to their mind, when they saw him perform that office.

These circumstances, together with his vanishing out of their sight, convinced these two brethren that Christ Jesus had actually rose from the dead, and no doubt such circumstances would convince the most confirmed unbeliever on earth. As might rationally be expected, these two brethren immediately returned, that night, to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together and them that were with them, saying the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon. They then related to this large company, what they had seen, and how Jesus was known unto them in breaking of bread. “ And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace

be unto you." This appearance produces fearful terrors in the first instance, but he does not leave them in this consternation, but reasons with them as follows. "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet." This filled them with joy and wonder. He then asked them if they had any meat? "And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish and of an honey-comb. And he took it and did eat before them. And said unto them, these are the words which I spake unto you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." He then opened their understandings to understand the scriptures. And said unto them. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." This was as good an opportunity for the disciples to be fully satisfied of the truth of the resurrection of that man with whom they had had a long and very circumstantial acquaintance, as was necessary. They could not have been deceived. Those circumstances would convince any rational man, however confirmed in unbelief, of the same fact. But, the objector says, it is possible that those disciples were impostors, that they framed the story and the above circumstances and palmed them on the people for truth. To this objection, which is the only one to be made, we reply. 1st. It was not possible in the nature of things, that a company of men in that day should plan a fraud in the days of Moses, prosecute it through all the different ages of the Jewish church, and then ripen it into effect. The WONDERS of the EVIDENCES of THIS THING, are as great as the WONDERS of nature, in its utmost sublimity, within the reach of human thought. Who ever can believe that a fraudulent religion, or a religion which is an imposture could have been begun in the days of Moses, and grow and ripen through so many different ages, by types, symbols, prophecies and remarkable events, and finally establish itself by the conviction of many different nations to the belief of its principles, resting the whole on the fact of the resurrection of a man from the dead, who in fact, never did rise from the dead, can believe the most improbable things which might be conjectured.

2d. Impostors never undertake the work of deception for the purpose of depriving themselves of every thing which dishonest and ambitious men are in love with. The disciples of Christ in vindicating his gospel and his resurrection, espoused a persecuted cause, in which they knew their leader had lost his life. What had they to encourage them in this wickedness? The smiting approbations of a good conscience, they must have known, would never soothe them in the rugged path of persecution in which they travelled. They could not have expected any reward, but evil, from God or man.

3d. As Jesus had informed his disciples that he should rise from the dead, it is according to the dictates of reason to suppose, that if he had not risen from the dead, according to his word, they would then have believed that he was an impostor, and would have forsaken his cause at once, even if they had been deceived before. We will suppose for a case, that an impostor should rise up in New England, under the pretension of reviving the true religion of Christ, laying it to the charge of our Christian clergy, in general, of having corrupted the gospel with traditional notions, forms and creeds. He should make this people believe that he could work miracles, such as healing the sick with a word, opening the eyes of the blind, healing all manner of infirmities among the people, and even raising the dead. He should attach to himself a few strict followers who should attend him every where he went; and should draw after him a promiscuous croud of people to hear him preach. He should state, in such a way as to have it generally known, that the clergy, being violently opposed to him, would use their influence with the civil authority, against him, and finally put him to death; and that on the third day after his execution, he should rise from the dead. Thus he goes on deceiving the people for several years. He finally tells his disciples that he must go to Boston the capital of Massachusetts where he shall be betrayed by one of them, into the hands of his enemies and that they will condemn him to death, that they will execute him and that he shall rise the third day after. He goes to Boston, is immediately arrested, has his trial, is condemned to die, the day of his execution comes, vast multitudes collect to see the impostor die. His disciples now forsake him, many however, feel so attached to him still, that they follow at a distance weeping in a bitter manner. He is executed, as he dies, he prays in a most fervent manner to God to forgive those who have been active in procuring his condemnation. He is tak-

en down from the gallows and put into a sepulchre, or tomb. It is now suggested to the authority that this impostor had taught the people and his disciples that he should rise from the dead the third day after his execution, and a watch is placed at the tomb to prevent any fraud being committed by his disciples. The third day comes, he does not rise. After this, however so many might have been deceived before, and led away after such an impostor, can any man in his reason, believe that any body would appear as his disciples.

We will further suppose that the disciples of this man collect together and agree to such a base and abominable fraud as to say that they had actually seen their leader alive since he was executed, and likewise agree to preach the same reformation which the impostor preached, and to urge the propriety and reality of their doctrine on the authority of the resurrection of their leader. After they had thus agreed on the deceit they collect together in a certain place in Boston, and it should be immediately known that they were together, and that they presumed to say that their leader had risen, and that they had seen him and known him in breaking of bread, in consequence of which, thousands of people should collect to hear what these impostors should say, and they should affirm that they had seen their leader alive after his execution, who can we reasonably believe would give the least head or credit to what they said ? Can we believe that such wicked men would establish a doctrine founded on such a fact which was utterly false, and even thousands to the belief of it, even in the neighbourhood where the fraud was invented ?

4th. If Christ and his disciples were impostors, there must have been some evil planned against the public or some individuals which would, in some way, operate to the gratification of some unrighteous vanity of theirs ; but this has never been discovered by any of the keen eyed enemies of the gospel. The first is, Christ never sought to gratify unlawful ambition or pride, but rebuked it in others, preached and practised the purest morality of any man on earth, preached a doctrine which was well supported by the ancient writings which the Jews held sacred ; he never attempted to disturb the affairs of state, he never promised any earthly reward to his disciples, but forewarned them that they must forsake the world and endure sore persecutions, and at last death, if they were faithful in his cause. It was under those circumstances that he engaged the witnesses of his resurrection to faithfulness in his ministry of mercy.

5th. There are five well-known books now extant, and in our

houses, which were written by different authors very near the time that Jesus Christ suffered death, which all agree in proof of the fact of the resurrection of Christ. The four Evangelists were written as histories of the life, preaching, miracles, persecutions, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Acts of the Apostles contains a history, founded on the fact of the resurrection, of the preaching, travels, miracles and persecutions of the Apostles who published abroad to the world the Gospel of Christ. Those books were, in very early times, translated into different languages, have ever been considered, since they were written, as containing a just and faithful account of the facts which they relate, they have been written and commented on by a vast number of authors in every century since, and are quoted as undoubted authority by more authors than any other books in the world. These books also contain an account of the institutions of certain ordinances which have been practised from the time of their institution until now, and the Gospel according to those authors, is believed by many nations, of many languages, (that is the Gospel is believed to be divine.) The sacrament of the Lord's supper is a standing evidence of the truth of the thing of which it was instituted as a celebration. Besides those books there are a number of epistles, written by the Apostles of Jesus Christ, which in a very masterly manner set forth the doctrine of the Gospel, founded on the fact of the resurrection, which contains the purest religion ever propagated among men, teaching mankind to deny every species of ungodliness and all hurtful lusts, to live sober, Godly lives, to exercise love and charity towards all mankind, not excepting our enemies. This religion teaches us the will and purpose of our Creator in cleansing the world from all sin and of delivering it from all consequent evil, and finally of perfecting its most bitter enemies, in a divine knowledge of its principles and in reconciliation to holiness.

There are likewise the writings of Moses, which are the most ancient in the world, which bear the marks of credibility, the writings of Hebrew historians and Prophets which all agree in directing our minds to the person, ministry and offices of Jesus Christ. These writings are kept in the hands of the Jews, who accordingly as those Prophets foretold, rejected their expected Messiah, and have ever held Moses as their prophet, in expectation that God would send them another leader. These books having been kept and held sacred by the Jews, is present positive proof that they were not written by Christians, since the Christiana era.

6th. The hope of life and immortality inspired by the Gospel is one of the greatest blessings, and in fact the greatest, with which our race of beings have been favoured. There is not a sincere believer in the gospel in the world, but would be willing to part with every other enjoyment in this world, rather than to part with this. The most wretched, poor, miserable, despised of all mankind, speaking in relation to what we call earthly things and circumstances, will break out in songs of joy and gladness, with praise and thanksgiving to God, the moment they release the hope of the gospel. It appears reasonable to conclude that a fact on which such a glorious fabric is built must be something more than a mere fraud.

It is sometimes said, though it cannot with propriety be stated as an objection to the resurrection, that the thing is incomprehensible and therefore is not entitled to belief. But this is reasoning as much to the expence of every principle in natural philosophy, as to those of the gospel, or even the particular of the resurrection. There is nothing of which we have a perfect comprehension of all its relations. We cannot comprehend how man first came into being, yet we are capable of demonstrating to our understandings, by the the order of propagating our species, that there must have existed a man and a woman who had not a natural father and mother as we all have. We know to our full satisfaction, that there never was a house built of timber, brick or stone, but of such timber which was once growing in the tree, before it was converted into a house ; or of such brick as was formed of clay or earth before it was converted into a building ; or of such stone which lay in its natural quarry before it was erected into an edifice by art. As well as we know these self evident facts, so well we know there was a time when there were no such buildings on earth.

By such refutations our minds are carried back to events which are as mysterious to us as the resurrection of Christ or of any other deceased person. Therefore the incomprehensibility of a thing stated to be true, is no argument that it is not true.

The foregoing observations in regard to the evidences which the Apostles had, and we at this day are in possession of by which we believe in Christ, are by no means considered as a formal dissertation on a subject of such magnitude but they are here inserted only as a few of the numerous arguments in favour of the fact of which an opinion was to be illustrated from the scriptures. And this, though not contemplated at the be-

ginning of this subject, was thought proper to accompany the illustration, which we will now pursue a little further. The whole of the 15th chapter in Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians seems to have been designed to confirm and establish the Corinthians in the belief of the resurrection. He first states the truth of the gospel which he had before preached to them, which they had received and wherein they stood, and by which they were saved unless they had belived in vain. He then reminds them of the manner in which he began to preach among them. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and that he was burried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures." Note, the scriptures to which the Apostle here alludes, must be those of Moses and the Prophets, as the scriptures of the New Testament were not at that time compiled into a book. He goes on, "And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." Here St. Paul gave his enemies as fair an opportunity to detect him, as was possible, admitting Christ did not rise from the dead. No body but a mad man would make such a statement knowing it to be false. He still goes on. "After that he was seen of James; then of all the Apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

He then states the low opinion which he entertained of himself on account of having persecuted the church of God, and then proceeds to reprove some among them for saying that there was no resurrection of the dead.

In this reproof he writes this remarkable passage, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." This passage fully accords with what has been before stated, that the resurrection of Christ Jesus is a fact on which the truth of the Gospel rests. It shows also that the Apostle was not only sensible that he was acting the part of a false witness on the supposition that Christ was not risen from the dead, but that he was ready and willing to be put to the test of his honesty and veracity, as an evidence, or a witness in this case. He had just before, as has been noticed, informed the Corinthians that Christ

was seen of more than five hundred brethren at once, after his resurrection, of which number of witnesses the greater part were then alive. But it is worthy of observation that the truth of the resurrection did not, by any means, wholly depend on the testimony of those who were eye witnesses of the fact, for its support and confirmation in the minds of others, for if that had been the case the people must have had to depend on human testimony, but it is evident that this was not the case. At Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, Peter preached to a multitude of people the resurrection of Christ, and adduced the testimony of David, in whom the Jews put great confidence, to show that the resurrection is the fulfilment of his prophecy; but there was such an additional manifestation of divine agency on that occasion, that no mention was made of the veracity of Peter, but those who heard, being Jews devout men out of every nation under heaven, marvelled that they heard every man in his own tongue wherein he was born. The happy result of this day's preaching was the addition of about three thousand believers in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to the Church.

This first of miracles, wrought for the purpose of accompanying the testimony of the Apostles with divine evidence of the resurrection, is here noticed that the reader may, from this instance, trace the wonderful works of God which attended the Apostles ministering in confirmation of their testimony in evidence of the resurrection.

There may be queries, rather of a speculative kind, in some minds, respecting the bodies which we shall have in the coming world, and the Apostle in the 15th of Corinthians, may not be perfectly understood as to that point, but there can be no question about the ultimatum at which he directed his argument, and that, to us, is all which ought to be considered important. He shows the order of the divine economy as it is written. "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthly, the second man is the lord from heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly, and is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." He likewise shows in as plain a manner as possible that this resurrection into the image of the heavenly man, would be as universal as the death in the earthly man.

For this purpose he speaks of Christ as the first fruits of them that slept. "For since by man came death, by man came also the

resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, EVEN so in Christ shall all be made alive." That this Apostle believed that there is immediate enjoyment after death in the presence of Christ, seems to be shown by his words to the Philippians see chap. i. 23. "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." This is evidently the greatest excellency of the gospel. It gives the soul of the believer victory over death, and presents, to the eye of faith, the blessed society of Jesus the brightness of the father's glory, promising to the weary sin-sick traveller final sanctification through the blood of the everlasting covenant. With great propriety did St. Peter call this faith PRECIOUS. If it be proper to call the most valuable things of this world precious, how much more shall that be called precious without which the present life is a barren wilderness, and which promises immortal life and riches in the world to come? If people in general were not blind to their own interest, would they not be daily seeking after those things which are laid up for them who love him, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift?

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OF THE SECOND DEATH.

The second death, spoken of in several passages in revelations, has been generally understood to signify a state of never-ending misery in the coming world; where far the greatest part of mankind will experience the pain of positive torment with every possible aggravation, as long as God exists, as a just reward for the sins they have committed in this life. This sentiment is supposed to be held forth and vindicated by the general tenor of scripture where it treats on the subject of punishment for sin, or of rewarding mankind according to their works.

For some considerable time past this sentiment has been doubted, by many in this country, as it has by some perhaps in the most of Christian countries ever since the days of the Apostles. However, even among those who have been fully satisfied, from the general tenor of scripture, that the opinion of the endless misery of God's rational offspring is not a truth which the wisdom of God saw fit to incorporate in the body of divine revelation, there are many who are still so much under the influence of traditional sentiments and notions, that when they read of the second death they hardly know in what light to view it.

This difficulty is nothing more than what might rationally be expected, for it is undoubtedly true that sentiments and opinions which are erroneous, having been imbibed in youth while the mind is tender and susceptible of quick and deep impressions, frequently never cease to act in some degree on the mind while the person lives, notwithstanding, perhaps he may see cause to change the general sentiments of his mind in respect to religion.

It is a fact noticed in the scriptures, that those Jews who were converted to Christianity were superstitiously fond of the ceremonies of the law of Moses, while those who were converted from heathen idolatry, frequently retained some superstitious reverence for an idol.

Such powerful influences are by no means so easily shook off as many may imagine, and while they think they are well purged from the old leaven of the Pharisees, some tinctures may still continue to agitate the affections and to blend the mind. Under such disguised and improper influence, no reasonable doubt ought to be entertained, that in the reformation from Popery, the Protestants retained some doctrines of the Catholic church which are as characteristic of the beast as any in their whole creed; and while the reformers paid great attention to apply the power of cleansing to the outside, too much uncleanness which lay within was passed by unnoticed.

Of all those doctrines which constitute the dark mystery of iniquity, and stand in opposition to the doctrine of the gospel of life, none can, with equal right, challenge so high a rank as that of the never-ending, unmerciful punishment above mentioned. Should we consider this doctrine in relation to the character which it gives to the father of our spirits, it must shock the mind with very sensible surprise, to see those cruelties which marked the characters of heathen gods, sublimated to infinity in the merciful Jehovah whose tender mercies are over all his works. Nor does the consideration of this sentiment in relation to its effects on the human heart, any more endear it to the embrace of those affections, which having been turned into the current of gospel grace, extend a Christian charity to all mankind.

Being confident that the foregoing remarks, on the doctrine of endless punishment, are uncontrovertible in the nature of things, it is conceived to be perfectly safe to begin our examination of the second death with an expectation of finding it to stand on different ground from the commonly received opinion.

If the result of the present disquisitions prove a disappoint-

ment to those who are in the habit of believing in the common opinion, this disappointment must be a very happy one, for if this result differ from the common opinion, it must of necessity, issue in something better, as it is impossible that it should in any thing worse.

As we take the scriptures for our guide, wherever this guide leads we ought to be willing to go, and by no means compel our pilots on to rocks and quicksands for the sake of gratifying notions erroneously formed.

The death of which an illustration is to be attempted, being called the "second death" renders it necessary that we inquire, to *what* death is it *second*?

Therefore labours on this general subject may be properly directed to ascertain,

1st. That death to which the second death may be properly considered second. And,

2d. The second death, and its similarity to the first.

The general opinion represents those deaths as different in their nature and circumstances as is possible to conceive. The first death is supposed to be the death of the body, and the second a state of never-ending misery.

The death of the body consists in a total extinction of life with all its appendages. In this situation there is no sense of desire, no sense of pain, or pleasure; no hopes, of course no disappointment; no love, nor fear; in short no happiness nor misery. Second to this, it is believed that a state of positive sufferings in the eternal world is properly placed, but we think erroneously. One moment of rational reflection would suggest the greater propriety of calling the above mentioned state of punishment, the second life; because in such a supposed state there are many appendages which bear a likeness to the life of man in this world, while there is not one which bears the least resemblance of the death of the body. The death which it seems proper to state as the first death is the apostacy of the Jewish church, which apostacy we shall find to be called or represented as a death. See St. John viii. 21, "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come." 24, "I said, therefore, unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The common opinion that Christ spake in the above quotations, of the death of the body, is corrected by the 51st verse of the same chapter. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my

sayings, he shall never see death." Jesus could not mean here that a man could avoid seeing the death of the body by keeping his sayings, but that a man might avoid seeing that death which those would die who did not believe in him.

Keep in mind that this death in sin is a consequence which the Saviour connects with unbelief, in the words following.—“For if ye believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins.” A few scriptures relating to the unbelief of the Jews, and the state of death and condemnation into which their unbelief brought them, will here be considered. St. John xii. 37—41. “But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not in him; that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him.” Mat. xiii. 13, 14, 15. “Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not: and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”

Rom. xi. 7—10 “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them: let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.” Dan. xii. 2, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

This passage in Daniel very fitly corresponds with the words of St. Paul before quoted, “The election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded,” the dust of the earth in which the Jewish Church was asleep, was the carnal ordinances of the law, and

the added traditions by which they made the law void. St. John v. 28, 29, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." St. Mat. xxv. 46, "And they shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." For an illustration of the passage quoted from Daniel, that quoted from St. John v. and this in St. Matthew the reader is referred to No. 2d p. 85. Those scriptures which I have quoted in this case are generally understood to refer to the same state of endless punishment which is supposed to be denominated the second death in Revelations.

But it is worthy of notice that the state of condemnation, into which unbelief brought the Jews, is never called, in scripture, the SECOND DEATH, though it is represented as a death.—The plain reason is, it being a death of unbelief and apostacy under the first dispensation, or Covenant, it is the first, and not the second death.

That the state of condemnation into which the Jewish Church fell, is not a state of endless punishment, is evident from many scriptures, particularly Rom. 11. where the Apostle continues his discourse from the above quotation, "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." Verse 15, "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead." And more to this effect may be seen in the same chapter.

2d. The death which the scriptures represent as second to the death which has been here illustrated, is the apostacy of the Christian church, and the state of condemnation connected with it. To this subject our minds may be directed by the following scriptures.

Heb. x. 26—29. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much soever punishment, suppose ye shall be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the

spirit of Grace ?" Rom. xi. 20, 21, 22, " Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear : for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God : on them which fell, severity ; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness : otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." The evident meaning of the Apostle here, is, on the Jews who **FELL**, God's severity fell ; and if you, Gentile believers, do not continue by faith in God's goodness, you also will receive the severity of God, in being cut off, as the unbelieving Jews were broken off through unbelief. 2 Thes. ii. 3, " Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." St. Paul spoke of the fall of the Jews in the quotation above, and here he speaks of the falling away of the Christian church and of the setting up of the man of sin. The blessed Jesus who sowed the word of the kingdom, in the hearts of the believers, knowing that this falling away, in the then future age of the church, would take place according to the signs given under the law by the travel of the Jewish church, represented it in his usual method, by a parable. See St. Mat. xiii. 24, 25, &c. " Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field : but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way, &c. 1 Tim. iv. 1, " Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

The first passage where the words *second death* occur, stands in such a connection as to render its meaning easy to understand. And it will appear, on a careful examination, not only to favour the idea which has been suggested, but to contain, argument within itself, to satisfy Christian professors, in general, that the second death does not mean a state of endless punishment.— See Rev. ii. 8—11. " And unto the Angel of the Church in Smyrna write ; these things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive ; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer : behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days ; be thou faithful un-

to death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches ; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Note 1st. This address is to a church of believers, who are exhorted not to fear those things which they had to suffer, to try them. 2d. Those who overcome all the trials which were put upon them, were not to be hurt of the second death. 3d. The fair conclusion is, that those who fell from their stedfastness in the faith and patience of Christ, would be hurt of the second death. 4th It is the opinion of Christian professors in general, that those who are brought to believe in Christ that they may fall away, yet not finally. It is then evident, that those who were believers in him who is the first and the last, who was dead and is alive, were liable by being overcome of the devil, to be hurt of the second death,

The epistle to the church in Sardis is remarkably clear on the subject in discussion, Rev. iii. 1—6, " And unto the Angel of the church in Sardis write ; these things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars ; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die : for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white : for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches." Note 1st. The church in Sardis is accused of being DEAD. That this death is the SECOND DEATH, is evident from the text quoted from the apostle to the church of Smyrna. " He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death". This shows, as has been noticed, that those who do not overcome, but are overcome, must be hurt of the second death. The church in Sardis had fallen into death, and are exhorted to repent ; they had not overcome, but were overcome, therefore, according to the text, when compared, the church of Sardis had fallen into the SECOND DEATH. 2d. It is acknowledged that there were a few names in Sardis, who had not defiled their garments. This was a testimony against the

greatest part that they had defiled their garments. Those who had not defiled their garments were to walk with him who hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars, in white, being worthy. This is a testimony, that those who had defiled their garments, should not walk with Christ, because they were not worthy. 3d. To those who overcome, it was promised, that they should be clothed in white, and that their names should not be blotted out of the book of life, but that their names should be confessed before God and his Angels. This is a plain testimony, that those who had not overcome, but were dead, should not be clothed in white nor walk with Christ, but that their names should be blotted out of the book of life and disowned before God and his Angels. 4th. In that the text proves that the major part of the church in Sardis, had defiled their garments, it as fully proves that they had garments which were not defiled. And wherein the text shows that those who did not overcome, should have their names blotted out of the book of life, it as fully shows that their names had been written in the book of life, for they could not be blotted out if they were not there.

It may be as well at this time, to see where our researches will end, as any time. See Rev. xx. 14, 15, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." It is now perfectly plain, that those whose names had been in the book of life, were blotted out, and their names being blotted out, they were cast into the lake of fire, which is called the second death. In the 21st chapter and 8th verse, the above lake of fire is called "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death."

This fire and brimstone is spoken of in the 14th chapter as follows. See verses 9, 10, 11, "And the third Angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Note 1st. This fire and brimstone is called the SECOND DEATH, in the quotation from chap. xxi. 8. 2d. This fire

and brimstone is called the wine of the wrath of God in this last quotation. 3d. Those who are set forth to be the sufferers of this second death we learn from the following passages in connection with this above quoted. See chap. xxi. 8, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. In the quotation from the 14th chapter, those characters are distinguished as receiving the mark of the beast, by worshipping the beast, &c. See chap. xiii. 16, 17, "And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead : and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." 4th. According to the quotation from the 14th chapter, the worshipers of the beast are tormented with this fire and brimstone at the same time that they are worshipping the beast. See the text, "And they HAVE no rest day nor night who WORSHIP the beast or his image." This suffering is not only confined to the time when the beast is worshiped, but also to DAY and NIGHT, which shows it to be in this world of error and condemnation. 5th It is observed, note 2d, that this fire and brimstone is called the wine of the wrath of God. This wrath and the dispensation of it is noticed in the following scriptures. Chap. xv. i, "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues ; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." Verse 7, "And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth forever and ever." Chap. xvi. 1, 2, "And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth ; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image." This wrath of God, this fire and brimstone, this lake of fire, and this second death are evidently all the same thing ; and nothing can be plainer than that this suffering is on this earth, during the changes of day and night, and while the beast is worshiped. If we carefully examine the whole dispensation of this wrath of God, represented by the pouring out of the seven vials, it will still confirm this opinion. See verse 3, "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead

man : and every living soul died in the sea," See further " The third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters ; and they became blood." The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, &c. The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast. The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air. What is there in all this, which has the least to do with an eternal state of mankind in a future world ? Will this beast be worshiped in the eternal world ? See chap. xiii. 5, " And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies : and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." This cannot mean an endless duration. This is the same forty and two months which the holy city was to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, the same forty and two months which the woman was to be in the wilderness, the same as the three days and a half which the dead bodies of the two witnesses were to lie in the street of the great city which we have seen in a former subject to signify one thousand two hundred and sixty years.

The similarity between this second death and the death which has been illustrated as the first, is very evident. The lively oracles of God were given to the Jewish church as they also were to the Christian church. The Jewish church corrupted and made void the law by their traditions, and the Christian church has corrupted and made void the Gospel by their traditions. The Jews denied the holy one and the just, and desired a murderer—and the Christian church have denied the holy Jesus, the just God and the Saviour, and have desired the murderous antichrist. The Jews fell under great condemnation, and the judgments of God were poured out upon them in an awful manner—and the Christian church by reason of similar sins have and are meeting with similar awful and dreadful calamities. They have shed the blood of saints and of martyrs and God hath given them blood to drink for they are worthy.

All these things are noted at large in the scriptures and they are written for our admonition. But as has been noticed, the scriptures do not exclude the apostatised Jewish church from the final benefits of the Gospel, but on the contrary show that the receiving of them shall be life from the dead. So also in the merciful counsels of divine grace, as taught in the scriptures, we find that the beast, who is antichrist, and the worship of the beast, together with the wrath of God, will not eternally last, but will close in due time, and that dispensation of Universal ho-

finest and happiness will commence, which is noted in Rev. xxi. 3, and on, in which it is declared that the tabernacle of God is with men, and that he will dwell with them ; and wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and that there shall be no more DEATH. Here then there must be an end to the SECOND DEATH. It is further said that there shall be no more sorrow nor pain. And the reason given, is, that the former things, (relating to the lake of fire) are passed away, and that he who sits upon the throne should make ALL THINGS NEW.

Altho' there are a great many arguments furnished in the scriptures of the Revelation as well as other parts of the New Testament, by which this subject might be further illustrated, which have not been here noticed, it is conceived that the general subject is made sufficiently plain, to render further arguments unnecessary to be here inserted. Whoever would wish to acquaint themselves with further light on the subject, can easily do it, by comparing the scriptures which treat on the various particulars which have been brought under consideration.

Many, no doubt, who having formed a different opinion, on the subject of the second death, will at first, feel a hesitancy in subscribing to the one suggested in the foregoing investigation : but if the scriptures decide on the ground which has been argued, it is seriously hoped that no professed lovers of divine truth will shut their eyes, willingly against this testimony.

Showing that the scriptures do not support the commonly received doctrine of endless misery, it is hoped, will be gladly approved by all Christian readers, though they may have unhappily imbibed that general sentiment ; as it is evident to every considerate mind, that that doctrine is opposed to all the godlike desires of the real Christian. The character of God, to the understanding of man, relieved from all the odium which the doctrines of antichrist have wickedly charged upon him, will shine with infinite beauty, through the mediation of Christ Jesus, to the reconciliation of those who have been alienated through the ignorance there is in them.

What gross darkness must that have been, which first produced the opinion that the wisdom of God had so disposed of events, that the scheme of divine revelation, through Jesus Christ, issues in God's endless wrath and vindictive vengeance poured out on his own rational offspring, as long as he himself shall exist ?

Can any thing be devised more contrary to the testimony of all those scriptures which speak so fully of the love of God to

the world of mankind ? If God possess an attribute of anger which is to be eternally exercised in administering positive pain and misery to the creatures whom he has made, why should the Holy Ghost speak, by the mouth of David, and say, "His anger endureth but a moment ; in his favour is life : weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

The better to expose at one view the error of supposing that the condemnation and punishment which divine revelation has attached to those who receive the mark of the beast is endless misery, let us place together the following passages. Rev. xiv. 9, 10, "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb." Chap. xiii. 16, 17, "And he caused all, both small great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead : and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Chap. vii. 9, 10, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb." Chap. v. 13, 14, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb, for ever and ever. And the four beasts said amen. And the four and twenty Elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever."

John Ballou

OF CHRIST'S PREACHING TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.

THE passage which speaks of this preaching is found in 1 Peter iii. 18, and on "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, (that he might bring us to God) being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit : by which also he

went and preached unto the spirits in prison ; which some time were disobedient when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." On the above passage, there has been much contention between commentators, whose aim, as it appears, was to accommodate the text to their respective opinions, so as to favour their general sentiments. Protestant commentators, in general, are agreed that the preaching, noticed in the text, was the preaching of Noah to the old world. It is evident, however, that the Protestants were rather driven to such a far-fetched explanation, in order to avoid an idea which they found in the Papal faith, though that idea was more consistent with some of the ancient fathers, than the one they adopted. As long as men are disposed to learn the scriptures how to talk, before they are willing to be taught by them, the scriptures will be forced to speak as many different languages as were spoken at the building of Babel, and with as much confusion.

Our duty is plain, and as easy as it is plain. It is only to let the scripture speak its own most natural language, connecting the divine testimony, and permitting one part to explain to us, what may appear enigmatical in another. It may be proper, in the first place, to carefully examine the passage in Peter with a view to see what it says ; and in the second place it may be proper to allow that the passage says what it really means, and then illustrate the text by the assistance of other passages. The text says 1st. That Christ has once suffered for sins. 2d. That he being just, suffered for the benefit of the unjust. 3d. That the benefit which was designed to result to us, as the unjust, from the sufferings of Christ, is, our being brought to God. 4th. Christ being put to death in the flesh was his suffering for sin, and his being quickened by the Spirit enables him to bring us to God. 5th. Christ having been put to death in the flesh, and quickened by the Spirit, by which he had power to bring sinners to God, he went and preached to the spirits in prison. 6th. These spirits in prison, to whom Christ preached, were disobedient when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah. 7th. The preaching to those spirits in prison was performed, by Christ, after he was put to death in the flesh and quickened by the Spirit. The foregoing seven particulars are as plainly expressed in this text as we could reasonably expect that they might be in so few words, nor does it appear that there are any words wanting to carry those ideas with plainness to the mind. As

was proposed, we will now allow that the text really means what it says, and look for an illustration of the disputed part, in other scriptures. The opinion which modern commentators oppose to that of the ancient fathers of the church, is; that the preaching noticed in the text, was performed by the spirit of God in Noah, to the inhabitants of the earth in the days before the flood, while those to whom this preaching was sent were in the flesh.

It has been hinted before that this far-fetched explanation was a mere shift to which Protestant divines were driven; and on a candid view of the text, it is natural to suppose that something very formidable must have attacked them, to have driven them to such an unwarrantable shift. There is nothing said in the text about the Spirit's preaching, or of Noah's preaching. To how many inhabitants of the old world is it supposeable that Noah could have preached? The number must have been very few, in comparison with the whole. And yet if he had had the power to preach to every individual of the old world, it ought not to be used to prove that Christ did not preach to their spirits, after he was put to death in the flesh and quickened by the Spirit, as stated in our text. That Jesus Christ does actually possess, as Lord of all, the dead as well as the living. St. Paul shows in Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 9, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." St. Peter, seemingly with a design to make this subject as plain as possible, alluding in his 4th chapter, to what he states in his 3d, speaking of those who should give an account to him who is ready to judge both the QUICK and the DEAD, says, verse 6th, "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." By this the apostle tells us what was preached to the spirits in prison, and what it was preached for. It was the gospel that was preached, and it was preached to those who were not in the flesh, that they might be judged as if they were in the flesh, but that they might live according to God in the Spirit; even that Spirit which quickened Christ and gave him power to bring us to God. In this subject there is not the least ambiguity, nor is there any other difficulty than that it is as plain and direct a contradiction of the commonly received o-

pinion, i. e. that there is no mercy to be communicated to those who die in unreconciliation to God, or in unbelief of the gospel, as can possibly be stated. It may be proper, by way of indulgence, to ask which appears most warrantable, either to allow this subject to stand exactly as the scriptures, above quoted, state it, or to contradict those scriptures by limiting the goodness of God without any authority from scripture for so doing ! It is a thing much to be desired and fervently prayed for, that those who so frequently and so earnestly labour to limit the holy one of Israel, in the dispensation of his grace, would pause, and inquire into the authority by which they are to be supported.

The pretension that the sentiment, so plainly taught in those scriptures, which have been considered, is a sentiment which tends to make sinners careless about their future and eternal welfare, not only treats the word of God with impertinence, but is subject to a fair refutation. What right have we to do violence to the scriptures under the pretension that the doctrine taught by them is unwholesome ? If that were the case, where would the blame lie ? It is conceived that Christian modesty ought to silence such impertinent objections ! It is, however, found in the scripture which we have considered, that those spirits, to whom the gospel was preached, with a design that they might live according to God in the spirit, were JUDGED as they who were in the flesh, by him who is the proper judge of the quick and the dead. This judge says, "I will give unto every one of you according to your works." Far be it from the word of God either to encourage the sinner in wickedness, or to discourage him from hoping in divine mercy. God is a just God and a Saviour.

James B. ...

OF THE TIME, COMMONLY CALLED THE MILLENNIUM.

This period of time seems immediately to succeed the reign and kingdom of the beast. Of course, this thousand years may be supposed to have begun, when it may be supposed that the forty and two months, the one thousand two hundred and three score days, the three years and an half, the time, times and half a time, (which all agree in one thousand two hundred and sixty natural years,) closed. Or if it better suit to put the close of antichrist's kingdom in the now future tense, every one may

have his opinion ; though it seems reasonable enough to suppose that satan is so bound now, (as to deceiving the nations,) that he has but little more to do than to vent his spite at the chain of divine truth with which his deceptions are discovered and limited. One important circumstance, which distinguishes this period of time, is noticed in Rev. xx. 4, " And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

This passage is misunderstood and misapplied when used to prove that all who have been believers in Christ, in this life, will be raised from the dead, and live here on the earth a thousand years ; for there are none spoken of in the text but those who were BEHEADED for the witness of Jesus. Nor does it well comport with the general character of this book of Revelations, to suppose that those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus should LITERALLY rise from the dead, and live PERSONALLY on the earth. This notion is no better founded than an opinion would be, that the two witnesses of whom notice has been taken, were two individual persons, who were killed by a literal beast, and whose dead bodies lay above ground in the street of some great city, for one thousand two hundred and three score days ; after which they literally rose from the dead, and ascended up to heaven. Our Christian scribes are subject to error as well as the Jewish scribes. The scribes of old who professed to know the law and the prophets, taught the people to expect Elias the prophet, according to the prophecy of Malachi, but they so misapplied the scripture that they knew him not when he come, and finally he was put to death. See St. Mat. xvii. 10—13, " And his disciples asked him, saying, why then say the scribes that Elias must first come ? And Jesus answered and said unto them Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not ; but have done unto him whatsoever they listed : likewise shall also the son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." Those scribes of the Jewish church expected old Elijah would come into Jerusalem and espouse their doctrines and principles, and make such a display of divine power in defence of their tenets and traditions, that it would put their opponents to

complete confusion. But so far from their expectations, when Elias came they thought him possessed of the devil ! And why should they not ? For he was wild enough to call them a generation of vipers, and exhorted them to repent ! Such wild confusion and irreligious impiety, might, it is true, incense those learned divines and call forth the worst of their anathemas, but could never inspire them with ever a dream of the good old prophet Elijah.

Is it not possible for Christian scribes, (who profess to understand the law and the testimony, who teach the people soon to expect a glorious day, when those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus will rise from the dead, make their appearance in defence of their doctrines and traditions, putting to silence every thing which they call error,) to make as great a mistake as the Jewish scribes did ? Is it to be expected that an order of clergy who stands in the very spirit of persecution, which is the great characteristic of the BEAST, should know the features of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, any better than the old scribes did those of Elijah, which were so plainly displayed in John the Baptist ? It is more reasonable to suppose that such an order of clergy should do as their prototype did, and oppose the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, supposing them to be, what they are not, possessed of the devil. The souls of them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, are the doctrine, sentiments, and testimony which those bore who were put to death by antichrist. The true testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ rising into life and prevailing against the doctrines maintained by those who preach a ministration of death and condemnation, is meant by those souls living and reigning with Christ.

If the suggestion in a former subject, that the present time may be the time of the rising of the two witnesses, be correct, it is consistent to conceive that the living of the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, is the same thing, differently expressed, and is now taking place in the Christian church. This thousand year's reign of Christ is introduced by the binding of Satan, who is to lie in his confinement the same period, not being permitted to deceive the nations any more until the thousand years are finished. This binding of Satan, is performed by an angel who comes down from heaven with a great chain for that purpose.

This angel may justly represent a pure ministry, and the great chain, the system of divine truth which lies along in the word of God, from the early promises through the law and pro-

phetic dispensation and ends in Jesus. Satan, the dragon, the old serpent and the devil comprehend all civil and religious power, of a tyrannic cast, all false doctrines and errors in which the world has been deceived, and which constitute the mystical Babylon the mother of harlots. When divine truth shall have triumphed over satan in all his forms, the kindoms of this world will become the kindoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and the church possessing the sentiments and pure religion of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, will shine forth in the beauty of holiness, and in the righteousness of her God. It is hard to deny ourselves the satisfaction of believing that these things are fast advancing. It is evident that the power to persecute is now extremely limited, even where the will seems to exist, and it is just, no doubt, to conclude that there is much less of the latter than formerly. These sentiments seem to inspire great encouragement in the ministry of the true testimony, and hold up also suitable warnings against the practising of any deceit in handling the word of God. Although the gospel of salvation will never be wholly subverted again on the earth, yet satan will be loosed for a little season, at the expiration of the thousand years, and will deceive many nations, and dispose them in spiritual battle array against the true testimony, but the defeat will be glorious for truth, and falshood will no more be able to establish itself in the world. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." As we have seen, that the living again of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, is a revival of their doctrine and testimony, so it seems to be according to analogy, to suppose that the living again of the rest of the dead, signifies the reviving again of those false sentiments which are destroyed, in the destruction of antichrist. The reviving of those false sentiments is represented by satan's being loosed for a little season to go forth to deceive the nations.

You see, dear brother, that as was suggested, these subjects are too extensive for a private letter, and you will also observe that what has been written on them, occupies a very limited disquisition. A vast many important relative subjects have been totally neglected, many arguments illustrative of those subjects of discussion, have been passed by, and but little has been done.—However, I cannot but hope that the object suggested, of edifying others, may in some degree, be realised, and if more than modesty would permit to expect, be the result, and some inquirer should obtain further light in consequence of this imperfect effort, let him who walketh among the golden candlesticks have the praise, for he alone is worthy. Yours in the bonds of the Gospel.

LETTER TO REV. P—— H——.

[NOTE. *The following was written as a mere private letter, without any idea of its being made public ; but as there may be many other ministers of the Congregational order, who, like Mr. —— are fully convinced of the truth of the doctrine of universal grace, and who, from various considerations, decline preaching it as a doctrine, it is thought that it may be beneficial to them, as well as to mankind in general, to make it public.*]

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Having received your statement, in short, of the subject upon which you wish to converse with me, perhaps it may be to our mutual benefit to state the substance of our conversation in writing : This will give more time for consideration before we come to a final decision.

Your queries, Sir, if I understand you, may be thus stated.

1. Are all events determinate and certain ? And if so, does man act by fatal necessity in all that he does ?

2. If man has no power to avoid doing as he does, nor to do that which he does not, wherein is he to be blamed for any of his actions ? Or with what propriety may he be called upon to seek or strive for this, that, or the other good ; or to avoid this, that, or the other evil ?

3. Admitting that all mankind will eventually be brought to holiness and happiness, is it best to make it a leading point, in preaching, to prove this doctrine ? And not, rather endeavor to stir up mankind to obtain an inward principle of love and piety, towards God ; (which alone can make them happy ;) and let their faith in universal salvation, if it will, grow spontaneously out of this inward principle of love and piety towards God, and their own reflections on the subject, rather than to enforce it upon them by arguments ?

4. When a man has sat under a minister until he is fully convinced that his doctrine, generally speaking, is incongruous with the doctrine of Christ, and it is not convenient for him to attend any other meeting, is it right for him to neglect the meeting on that account ? or withhold his support from the minister ?

Perhaps, Sir, I have not stated these queries exactly as you would wish to have them, or as you would have stated them, yet, it is presumed, that my remarks upon them, as they are now stated, will give you a full understanding of my mind upon the subjects of our late conversation.

The method which I shall pursue in answering the above queries, will be, first, to state the premises which I believe to be correct, with such reasons as I shall deem conclusive ; and, secondly, I shall quote some scripture testimonies in support of those premises.

1. The first query contains two particulars. 1. Are all events determinate and certain ? And 2. If so, does man act by fatal necessity ?

1. That some events are determinate and certain, I think, will not be disputed by any.

It would be utterly impossible for an astronomer to calculate the eclipses, the transitions of the planets, &c. unless those events were certain. And so with every event which takes place by fixed laws, or pursuant to the regular order of nature. And even what may be considered irregular, by us, or without any fixed laws, are undoubtedly all perfectly regular with God.

It requires but a very small capacity to discover that even God's holy prophets never could have predicted a single event with any degree of certainty, unless those events were absolutely certain to take place.

And we may argue further, that if an event be certain to take place, it must be equally certain that *that event* has a *cause*, and that *cause* a prior *cause*, and so on *ad infinitum*, or until we come to the first or *Eternal Cause*. And if an event have no cause, admitting that such an event does exist, it must exist accidentally, or by chance : and if one event may exist in this way, why may not all ?

I, therefore, can see no reason why we may not suppose that all events are certain as well as any.

Again. If the foreknowledge of God (or knowledge, if that term be any more correct) extend to all events, (and but very few will deny the propriety of supposing that all future events are foreknown to the Deity) I may be allowed to ask whether an event can possibly take place which Deity did not, even from eternity, infallibly know would exist ? Or whether an event could possibly fail of taking place, which Deity infallibly foreknew, from eternity, would take place ? If not, then the doctrine of the absolute certainty of all events is established, on a foundation, as firm and immutable as the KNOWLEDGE of GOD.

It makes no difference, in this argument, what makes the event certain, or whether Deity knows them by *intuition*, or by reasoning from *cause*, to *effect*. Suffice it to say, that he KNOWS them ; and if he know them, although his knowledge do not *make* them certain, yet it *proves* them to be so.

To this I will subjoin a note by a Calvinistic writer, which I am willing to adopt here as my own sentiments.

“ No argument, I apprehend, can be more conclusive. Common sense must see, and admit, its force. It is impossible even to conceive of an event's being infallibly foreknown, which will not certainly come to pass. If God did, from eternity, *infallibly foreknow* every future event, no consequence can be plainer, than that every future event, was, from eternity, *infallibly certain*. And indeed, on no other ground, can it be made to appear that God and all his works are perfect : or even that such a being exists. It is on this ground only that the invisible things of God are seen from the things which are made. If any events have taken place, contrary to the design and purpose of God, surely such events cannot evince his perfections. But if every event takes place, under the direction of infinite wisdom, according to God's original plan, and is made to subserve the greatest possible good ; then every event will, in the issue of things, display the infinite perfections of Deity.

“ On these principles we can infallibly prove the Divine existence, from any effect we can perceive, whether *external or internal* : From things which are *small*, as well as from things which are *great* ; from the existence of the smallest insect, the shaking of a leaf, from a thought of the mind, a desire of the heart, as well as from the whole material system.

“ But if I should say, that one event, or one thing, may take place, independent of Divine efficiency, who will venture to set the bounds where I may consistently stop ; or draw for me the line of distinction, between events which take place by Divine efficiency, and those which take place independent of God ? If one event may take place without Divine efficiency, why not two, ten, or ten thousand ? And why may not all things be accounted for in the same manner ?

“ He who can demonstrate that one event has been produced, without Divine agency, will meet with no difficulty to invalidate every argument, which can be advanced in proof of the being of a God. And he who denies the universality of Divine operation, has not, as I can see, an inch of ground left, upon which he can consistently dispute an Atheist.”

Thus you will see that I am not alone in these arguments. Every argument which goes to prove the existence of a God, also proves his perfections : And every argument which goes to prove his perfections, also proves the universality of his government, and the certainty of all the events of his providence.

Nothing can act where it does not exist—nothing can begin to exist without a cause—and nothing but an eternal principle can exist independent of the First Cause.* The several parts form but one great stupendous whole : one part is dependent on another, and all are connected : hence every action must be directed by the *primum mobile*, or the *first moving cause*, and is therefore *certain*.

“From Nature’s chain whatever link you strike,

“Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.”

I shall now quote a few passages of scripture in support of this proposition, and will then pass to consider the second part of this query.

Job xiv. 5, “Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee ; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass. Dan xi. 36, “For that that is determined shall be done.” Luke xxii. 22, “The Son of man goeth as it was determined.” Acts ii. 23, “Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” Acts iv. 28, “To do what thy hand and thy counsel had determined before to be done.” Acts xvii. 26, “And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bound of their habitation.”

These, and many other passages that might be mentioned, clearly evince that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ; and that all events both in the natural and moral world are predetermined and overruled by infinite *wisdom, power, and goodness*.

2. The second part of this query must now be granted of course. For if all events are *foreknown* and *determined* by the Deity, the actions of men must be foreknown and determined, whether morally good or bad ; and therefore will certainly take place, and cannot possibly be avoided ; which amounts to every thing that can be understood by fatal, or *moral*,† necessity.

We find that the evil actions of men are as often foretold, by the prophets, as their good actions : And the destinies of men have been often foretold, to no *good effect*, unless it be to show us that events are equally certain before they take place, as it is certain that they have taken place after they are accomplished :

*. i. e. Nothing but an eternal principle, GOD, is self-existent.

† I conclude that nothing more is meant, by those who hold to the doctrine of *fate, foreordination, predestination, or decrees*, than the *moral certainty* of all events, from eternity. I object, however, to the word *fatal*, which signifies, *deadly, or destructive*, but many of the events of providence, however certain, are neither *deadly* nor *destructive*.

For events; however evil, being foretold by the spirit of prophecy, never yet prevented their coming to pass : Witness *Ahab*, and what was prophesied concerning him, first by *Elijah*, and secondly by *Micaiah*, which seemed to be contradictory, but both were fulfilled. See 1 Kings xxi. 19,—xxii. 28, To come directly to the point : It was as true from eternity that Judas would betray his Lord and Master, and Peter deny him, as it was when Christ informed them of those painful circumstances ; or is true now that those events did take place. Now, if it had been in the power of either Judas or Peter to have acted contrary to the declaration of Christ, was it not equally in their power to have proved that Christ himself was a false prophet ?

Christ speaks of those events as being certain ; and even if we are at liberty to suppose that Judas and Peter possessed a power by which they might have acted otherwise than they did, yet was it not equally certain that they would not exercise that power ? And a power that is certain not to be exercised never yet did, nor will it ever do either good or hurt. The most venomous and poisonous serpent, if we were sure it never would exercise its power to any one's hurt, would be as harmless a creature as an innocent lamb.

The actions of men are altogether involuntary or else they proceed from motives ; and a man never can act from a less motive in preference to a greater ; that is, he must act from that motive which makes the greatest impression on his mind. And as our motives are altogether produced by the objects presented to our view, together with our circumstances and the state of our mind, at the time those objects present themselves, and as those objects, our circumstances, and the state of our minds, at the time any object presents itself, are things over which we have no control, so it is not in our power to avoid the impressions which they make ; and the action, under those circumstances, follows of course.

When a man can control the blood in his own veins, cause his pulse to beat slow or quick at pleasure ; when he can hear, see, feel, taste, or smell, objects that do not come in contact with those senses ; or when he can avoid those sensations, if objects are presented and brought in contact with the sense ; then he may conclude that he is possessed of equal power over the faculties of his soul.

In reasoning upon this point, I let my mind run freely, without any reserve, where truth appears to lead it, without anticipating any difficulty which it will involve me in under the sec-

ond query ; for truth is always consistent with itself, and will never lead the understanding into difficulty and then forsake it ; but if we adhere to its dictates, and travel on, it will at last land us on the peaceful shores of light and consistency.

Permit me to return once more to Judas and Peter, whose actions, by the way, may be taken for a specimen of the actions of all mankind. It must be granted that those events were certain, at least, at the time when Christ made those declarations ; which, as it respects Peter, the declaration, " thou shalt deny me thrice," was certainly before Peter had done any thing on his part to make it certain ; neither could he at that time be convinced of its truth ; for he said, " Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." It therefore makes no difference, in this argument, whether we say this event was made certain at the time Christ made the declaration, or at the birth of Peter, or from eternity. If it were certain that Peter would deny his Lord only one hour, or one moment, before he did it, or before he had resolved in his own mind to do it, he acted as much from *fatal necessity*, as though it had been certain from eternity. And if there ever were any propriety in saying that this event either might or might not take place, according to the will of Peter, even from eternity unto the time it did take place, that propriety must exist but one moment before, or even at the time, the event took place, as well as at any prior period. That is to say, in so many words, Peter might have answered the damsel differently from what he did, and every other question that might have been put to him, of a similar nature, so as not to have denied his Lord at all. And I do not deny but that this might have been the case, if the circumstances, and the state of Peter's mind, might have been differently situated ; but all things *were* as they *were*.

The same argument will apply respecting each and every action of mankind.

If mankind are what people mean by free-agents, I say that they are under a *moral necessity* of being *free-agents* ! which seems to be a contradiction in terms, but nothing can be more evident ! and it is not in their power to be any thing else but *free-agents* ! yet they are as much dependent on God for their free-agency, which empowers them to act, as the existence of their acts are dependent on that agency ! And if God gave them power which constitutes them free-agents, he gave that power, undoubtedly, to answer certain purposes ; it is therefore reasonable to suppose that he keeps that power continually under his own control ;

and it will eventually answer his own design, both in the whole, and in each particular. Therefore, should I grant that mankind are free moral agents, under God, that is, free to follow the dictates of their own understanding, yet it does not amount to any thing more than what I understand, or would wish to be understood by moral necessity—which has been erroneously taken for *fatalism*!

I shall now quote two or three passages to this point, and then pass to the second query.

2 Cor. iii. 5, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." Rom. xiii. 1, "For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." John xix. 11, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."

The foregoing are sufficient for my purpose. If Pilate could have no power against Jesus, except it were given him from above, I would ask whether any body else could have had that power? In a word, if all power be of God, has any man power even to do what we consider to be an evil action, except it be given him from above? "Is there evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it?" Which brings me to consider the second query.

2. If man has no power to avoid doing as he does, nor to do that which he does not, wherein is he to be blamed for any of his actions? Or with what propriety may he be called upon to seek, or strive, for this, that, or the other good; or to avoid this, that, or the other evil?

I am well aware that, at the first sight, the premises laid down under the first query naturally suggest an idea to the understanding that a man cannot be blameable for doing an action which it was not possible for him to avoid; and that this principle takes away all distinction between virtue and vice, sin and holiness.—And by looking to such consequences, which are supposed necessarily to follow, many reject the principles, as dangerous, without a thorough examination.

To obviate this difficulty, let us enquire first wherein the blame of an action consists; whether in the action itself, abstract from the motive that led to it, or in the motive of the actor? And I apprehend that a very little attention to this subject will enable us to discover that there can be neither virtue nor vice in any action abstractly considered; that is, separate from the motive of the actor.

A man may be killed by the fall of a tree ; yet as the tree can have no motive, there can be neither virtue nor vice in the tree. And if there be any good or evil in this action, in a moral sense, it must be in him who directed the course of the tree. And the action must be called good or evil, in a moral sense, according to the good or evil intention of the author of that action. And so far, and in every sense, in which it may be said that God is the author of the action, no one will dare presume that it is not designed for good.

Again. One man may take the life of another by an instrument which he holds in his hand. It is the instrument, in one sense, that kills the man (for we may suppose that the other man did not touch him, except with the instrument) yet no blame can be attached to the instrument, because it could have no motive. Hence you will see that the blame must be altogether in the motives or evil design of the man. And even if we should be under the necessity of granting that this man was under a *moral necessity* of possessing this evil motive, this so far from clearing him from *guilt* which is the fatal consequence of an evil design's being put into execution, it only proves him to be *guilty* ; for, no man can be under a moral necessity of being *guilty*, and at the same time *not* be *guilty* ! But I shall further consider this point in another place.

I shall now consider this man as an instrument in the hand of God, just as the instrument by which this man killed the other was in the hand of the man ; and, as an instrument, he must be as ignorant of the design of God as the instrument in the hand of the man was of the design of the man : and in that sense, there is no more blame to be attached to the man, which was used as an instrument, than there was to the instrument which was used by the man ; for both are instruments in the hand of God, the same as the tree, spoken of before, that fell and killed a man. And who is prepared to say that it is altogether inconsistent with the wisdom and goodness of God to make use of men as instruments in his hand to take the lives of men ? I presume none. And while we view men *wholly* as instruments in the hand, of God, i. e. *without considering, them as being conscious of their own actions*, we must view them as innocent, in all things, whatever they do as any of the dispensations of the providence of God ; as earthquakes, inundations, fire, famine, or pestilence, which often destroy the lives of men. “ And shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith ? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it ? ” even then may man

say that he will not be used as an instrument in the hand of his Maker to do an evil act ! See Isaiah x. 15. And as man, in a certain sense, must be considered as an instrument in the hand of God to perform whatever he does (that is consistently with God's power and wisdom) so, in that sense, he is neither blameable nor praiseworthy for his actions. Nor is he, in that sense, at all accountable for them. For it depends wholly on God whether the actions of men answer his design or not : and if not, who must be considered accountable ? Not man, surely, for, in the sense that we are now speaking, he is only the instrument. I wish to have it understood that I am now speaking of the system of God ; which is a perfect system ; in which every thing is subservient to the wise council of the GREAT ETERNAL, where God reigns Omnipotent without an opposer. As touching this system it is said of God, that, " He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." Why ? Because they were not sinners ? Because they were not a " rebellious and stiffnecked people ?" No. But because he meant all their actions for good, as he did those of Joseph's brethren ; and he knew that he should finally produce all the good that infinite wisdom designed.

If I am thus far understood, the way is now paved so that we can easily, and consistently with the premises laid down, draw a line of distinction between virtue and vice, sin and holiness, as they respect the actions of men.

Man, although an instrument in the hand of his Maker, is endued with moral faculties, so that, while possessed with reason and common sense, he is conscious of whatever he does. And although he is finite, so that he cannot foresee all the consequences of his own actions ; yet, as he can foresee, however imperfectly, some consequences, so he cannot act, in a moral point of view, without a motive. And whether his actions terminate agreeably to his expectations or not, they are good or evil in a moral sense, according to the good or evil intention he has in view.

Thus we may say with propriety, and consistently with the premises laid down, that a man is always blameable whenever he violates the law of his understanding ; that is, acts contrary to the dictates of his own reason ; or does that which he thinks is unjust ; or that which is improper for him to do ; and then only : " For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Prov. xxiii. 7.

It is true a man may err in judgment, and consequently feel justified in doing that, to day, which a further light and knowl-

edge would not justify ; but there is no moral turpitude in such acts, it is an error of judgment, only, which produces no guilt. Such an act may, perhaps, produce shame, or remorse ; but guilt cannot be produced without an evil intention. And whenever this is the case the pangs of guilt are no *less* because the act was predetermined by infinite wisdom ; for the guilt may be as much predetermined as the act that produced it.

Therefore, if any body can inform me wherein Joseph's brethren were blameable for selling Joseph to the Ishmaelites ; when " God meant it unto good ;" or wherein Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were blameable, for doing whatsoever God, by his hand and his counsel had " determined *before* to be done ;" then I shall be furnished with sufficient data to tell wherein every man is blameable for every sinful act, although all those acts were predetermined, and will finally be overruled, for good. And I presume that no one will attempt to exculpate those characters from blame, which I have named, for the sake of proving that man is a *free agent* !

It is now very easy to discover, that, agreeably to the premises laid down, the exhortations of the apostle are very proper. See 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, " I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, &c." For these " supplications," &c. must be considered as means, in the hand of God, to produce the glorious end ; " that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." And all the exercises of the human heart, in faith and repentance, love and good works, are perfectly consistent with the universality of Divine operation ; notwithstanding they are all made certain, in the economy of God, even from eternity.

In order to set this matter in a clear point of light, I am willing to take, for example, any sinner who has been brought from moral darkness into God's marvellous light, from a state of sin and condemnation into a state of newness of life in Christ Jesus, through the instrumentality of the preaching of the word, or any other means which God has been pleased to use. I will agree that this man has experienced every thing, and every thing has been done and performed for him, which were necessary to fit and prepare him for heaven and happiness. Now, let any one analyze these *means*, or *causes*, and their *ends*, or *effects*, and let it be demonstrated that such and such *means* or *causes*, produced such and such *ends* or *effects*, and I will agree that those *means* were necessary to produce these *ends* ; and it must first be made to appear, that man's "*chief end*," which, as it has been very

properly stated, "is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever;" is of no importance, before it can be granted that the *means* to obtain that *end* are unnecessary.

A circumstance full to my purpose is recorded in Acts xxvii. 22, 31, "For there shall be *no loss* of any man's life among you, but of the ship."—"Except these abide in the ship ye *cannot be saved*."

If there were any propriety in Paul's telling the soldiers that they must abide in the ship or they could not be saved, after he had promised them all life by divine authority; there is an equal propriety in telling sinners "Except a man be born again, or *from above*, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" notwithstanding we have positive testimony "that God will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

I might enlarge upon this subject, and perhaps it would be necessary, if I were writing for the public, or anticipated any serious objections to the premises as here stated; but my present object is to give you my ideas upon the several queries which you proposed to me in our late conversation, and, if necessary, I shall vindicate them more fully hereafter.

3. Admitting that all mankind will eventually be brought to holiness and happiness, is it best to make it a leading point in preaching to prove this doctrine? &c.

Barely to produce a kind of theoretical, or speculative, belief, in the doctrine of Universal Salvation, I conceive, would be of no essential service. Such ideas may reach the head, but they seldom affect the heart.

So long as mankind have no better understanding of the doctrine, than to embrace it under an infatuated notion that all men will be made happy in another world, whether they are made holy or not; or to embrace it because they believe it can be better supported by scripture than the reverse; or to believe it may be true in *theory*, without its being so in *practice*; or to believe it true in any sense, without understanding what is necessary to make it true; the doctrine under these views will have but very little influence upon their lives and conduct. And if by proving the doctrine be meant nothing more than to produce a belief that would gain such kind of proselytes, I conceive that a society would not receive much advantage by such kind of preaching. But if by proving the doctrine be understood the opening of the understanding into the nature of universal benevolence, and convincing mankind of the necessity of the doctrine's being true in *practice*, as well as *theory*, in order to have it true in *fact*; then I think that the faithful ambassador for

Christ has no other *leading point* to attend to but *this* ; that is, all our preaching should concentrate in this all-important *point*. In fact, if the doctrine be understandingly preached, in its purity, I conceive it would have the greatest effect towards producing an inward principle of love and piety of any thing that could be preached.

The idea of setting people to work up a principle of love and piety in themselves, in their own strength, in my opinion, is like making an *effect* produce its *cause* ; or making the *end* produce the *means*. A principle of love and piety at heart is the effect of being brought to the knowledge of the truth ; and not the being brought to the knowledge of the truth the effect of having a principle of love and piety. " We love him because he first loved us."

The propriety of this statement will more fully appear, if we consider that there is no principle in man capable of loving and hating the same object at pleasure ; that is, to love at will, or or in obedience to superior authority, or for fear of some evil consequence for not loving ! Such love as this is not worthy the name ; it is merely superficial, and not real. Something really lovely must be discovered in an object before it can be rationally loved.

If these premises are correct, as I conceive they are, then no man can have any real love for God until he discovers something really lovely in his character. And as " God is love," and his character altogether lovely, man only need to be brought to the knowledge of the truth, to discover such a divine excellency in the character of God as to produce real love in the understanding.

Therefore, I know of nothing better to give mankind true *faith* : that is, to bring them into the possession of that *faith* which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart, than to preach to them the *whole truth* ; " to declare the whole counsel of God ;" and if this can be done, with the demonstration of the spirit, it will most assuredly produce true faith.

Every rational wanting being is in pursuit of happiness, however widely they may have erred in their pursuit ; and the only primitive reason why their desires are not all equally directed to the great source of happiness, is because they are " alined from the life of God, through the *ignorance* there is in them."

Does it not then behove every ambassador for Christ, into whatsoever town or parish he may enter, to do as the apostles did ? " To deliver unto them first of all that which we also have

received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"—"who was delivered for our offences and rose again for our justification"—"who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time"—"who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption"—and of course—"all things are our's—and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

A belief in these things, rightly understood, would, in my humble opinion, have a much greater tendency towards producing real love and piety towards God, and benevolence and charity towards man, than all such exhortations as the following; viz. "You must watch"—"you must seek"—"you must strive"—"you must pray," &c. unless the creature has had some further encouragement than to be led to think that he must first, by his own exertions, move the Holy Spirit to effect his ultimate desire. All exhortations to the creature are vain and nugatory, unless he is first taught where to look for all his strength and hope. Our prayers and strivings, instead of being the *cause* of our *happiness*, are rather the *effect* of our *wants*; and to encourage people to strive with confidence, pray in faith, and run with patience, not uncertainly, like those who beat the air, let them be taught, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." See Eph. i. 3, 4.

4. Is it right for a man to forsake a meeting, and withdraw his support from a minister on account of difference of sentiment, &c.?

Among the great variety of sects and denominations of professed christians, I know of but *two*, essentially different from each other. And where there is not an essential difference, but only circumstantial, I can see no good reason why they cannot harmonize together.

These two sects, which I deem to be essentially different, are, 1. All those who believe in the holiness and happiness (in the final ultimatum) of all God's rational creatures: and 2, All those who believe in endless sin and misery.

For the sake of distinction, the one sect, I shall denominate *Partialists* (not meaning, however, to cast any reflection, but as being appropriate to their believing in *partial* salvation; that is, the salvation of a *part* only); and the other *Universalists*, as being appropriate to those who believe in universal salvation.

It is true there are different peculiarities of faith, modes and forms of worship, &c. in each of those systems ; and many, especially of the partial system, are very fond of considering those small differences things of essential consequence ; and therefore cannot cordially worship together, or hold fellowship with each other, on that account. And I would not presume to say but that those who make this difference feel conscientious in so doing. I chuse therefore to endeavour to convince them of the impropriety of nonfellowship in consequence of this difference, rather than to condemn them for it.

Were I a believer in the partial system, I think I should endeavor to worship where it was most convenient in that system ; whether among Calvinists, Hopkinsians, Episcopals, Baptists, Methodists, or any other people believing in a limited salvation ; and if two or more of those sects were convenient, I would worship where I could be the best edified.

The propriety of this will appear upon one moment's reflection. The consequences of the differences between those sectarians must be *infinite*, or else there is no *essential* difference. For if one sect may be saved as well as another, and some of all sects are saved, as is generally believed, then the want of salvation must be imputed to some other cause than their being of such a particular sect ; therefore there is no essential difference ; but if those of one sect are saved, and those of another are not, because they are not of that sect, then there is an *infinite* difference. But who can discover an infinite difference between the sects ? Surely none ! Why then should there be an infinite difference in their consequences ? And if there be not an infinite difference, according to that system, there is no difference at all ; because the *consequence*, (according to that system) will be either eternal *salvation* ! or endless *damnation* ! O is it possible that such a *widely* different consequence should depend on such a *minutely* different cause ? If not, I shall be justified in saying, there is no *essential* difference in those denominations.

Many of the above observations will apply with equal propriety to the Universalists. According to this system, there is not an essential difference in the consequence of the different opinions of any denomination whatsoever ; because all are finally to be brought to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. Hence Universalists, above all others, ought to harmonize together.

Again. Universalists should learn of Jesus, to " have compassion on the ignorant and those who are out of the way ;" and not be disposed to cast off any one on account of difference

in sentiment ; but be ready at all times to walk with them so far as they are disposed to walk with us, though not to support or propagate error, but to build them up in the truth.

We ought to learn to distinguish between men and their sentiments. Men may be very honest, and yet very erroneous ; and as honest men, they are entitled to respect, while their sentiments may be considered as tending to very *evil* consequences.

As it respects sentiments, in point of doctrine, I conceive that there are but two kind of ministers ; which are, the ministers of Christ, and the ministers of antichrist. The ministers of antichrist are all those who preach, instead of the true Christ, something in opposition to, or that which falls short of, his true character. And if “ the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” be the true Christ, any thing that falls short of this, is so far *opposed* to Christ ; that is, *anti*-christ.

And when any man is convinced that a minister is not a minister of Christ, but of antichrist, and that his preaching, however sincere he may conceive him to be, has a tendency to build up antichrist’s kingdom, I query whether it can be any longer his duty to uphold such a meeting, or the minister, by his support : or whether it would be his duty to attend such a meeting, unless it be to point out to others the inconsistency and absurdity of the doctrine.

To this I can apply the *golden rule* ; it is recommending to do to others as we would wish to be done by ; and I do not wish to have a man do any thing towards supporting the doctrine of Universal Salvation until he is persuaded that it may be true. I believe the doctrine would make greater progress without this kind of support than with it. “ Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Therefore, let us open our doors for any one to hear, free from expence, until he is so far convinced of the truth of the doctrine as to feel interested in its support. But I never wish to be instrumental in gaining a single proselyte, unless I can gain him understandingly, so that he will not abuse the doctrine by malpractice. And on the other hand, I do not think it is the duty of Universalists to do any thing, either directly or indirectly, to support the doctrine of *endless misery* ! “ For what concord hath Christ with Belial ?—And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? for ye are the temple of the living God.”

Perhaps, sir, you may think that I do the doctrine of the partialists injustice, by calling it the doctrine of *endless misery* ! But

how can I give it a better name, when this *item* embraces the most prominent features of their system, it being according to that system, the destiny of the far greater part of mankind : and even the heaven which they paint out, after all their plausibility of argument, to me, is at best but a miserable heaven ! And the difference between their heaven and hell is so little, that could it be submitted to a rational being, I should suppose that he would prefer nonexistence to either of them !

The glory of such a heaven all vanishes, when we connect with it the soul-chilling idea of the *knowledge* of never-ceasing torment ! And to enter there, with all the happiness that I could possibly conceive of enjoying, while possessed of the knowledge that millions of my fellow-creatures, who, like myself, were altogether dependent on God for existence, were nevertheless in endless torment, without the possibility of obtaining even a hope of relief, to me, with my present sensibility, would be such positive *misery* that I cannot even think of *enduring* it for a *moment* without the utmost *horror* !

Therefore, sir, you cannot think it strange that I am opposed to this doctrine. I am opposed to it in every shape or form in which it may appear. I believe it to be not of God (unless it be the God of this world) and therefore it must sooner or later fall to the ground. And I cannot think it would have stood so long as it has, were not pride and popularity enlisted in its favour. I make no doubt, however, notwithstanding all I have said, that many of the worshipers of antichrist are sincere and honest in their intentions, and really suppose that they are building up the cause of Christ. Such ones are rather to be pitied than blamed. And perhaps it would not be too great a stretch of charity to suppose that the worshipers of Baal, or Molock, were sincere, as well as those who are worshiping the same character under the sacred name of Deity : had they not been sincere they never could have cut themselves with lancets, or sacrificed their dearest objects, by causing their children to pass through the fire, to appease the wrath of their God !

Let us therefore, my brother, clothe ourselves with the whole armour of God, taking the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit, (weapons that are not *carnal*, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds) and go forth, from conquering unto conquer, until the sin destroying weapons of truth and love shall have sent into oblivion every thing that opposeth the Lamb of God which taketh the sin of the world.

Any remarks on this communication will be gratefully received and meet with an early attention.

With sentiments of esteem,

I am, dear Sir,

Yours Affectionately,

A. K.

REV. P. H.

July 20, 1809.

N. B. Mr. H. at first, thought he should make some remarks on the foregoing communication, but on the whole he found it not expedient.

REMARKS ON CALVINISM.

As extraordinary exertions appear to be making, and are made, to revive in this country the peculiar doctrine of John Calvin, who was born at Nogen, in Picardy, in the year 1509, and was made professor of divinity at Geneva, in the year 1536, which, doctrine, in our opinion, is both derogatory to the character of God, and destructive to the happiness of man, it will not be improper to examine it; in doing which, it will be necessary to enquire into its fundamental principles and compare them with the standard of divine truth.

And in the first place, it is necessary that we should know what the doctrine is, for nothing can be more improper than to denounce a doctrine as erroneous before it is understood.

“The principal tenets of the Calvinists,” (as stated in Adams’ view of Religion) are comprehended in five articles.

1. “That God has chosen a certain number in Christ, unto everlasting glory, before the foundation of the world according to his immutable purpose, and of his free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creature: and that the rest of mankind he was pleased to pass by, and ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sins, to the praise of his vindictive justice.

2. “That Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of the elect only.

3. “That mankind are totally depraved; in consequence of the fall; and by virtue of Adam’s being their public head, the guilt of his sin was imputed, and a corrupt nature conveyed to all his posterity, from which proceed all actual transgression: And that

by sin we are made subject to death, and all miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

4. "That all, whom God had predestinated unto life, he is pleased, in his appointed time, effectually to call by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ.

5. "That those whom God has effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, shall never finally fall from a state of grace."

But the fundamental principles of Calvinism, which we shall now examine, can be more briefly stated from the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, which, by every possible exertion, is taught to children, as containing the doctrine of the Bible, and to which, it is presumed, no Calvinist will object.

The two essential points, which are here particularly noticed, are expressed in the following words.

1. "All mankind by the fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever,

2. "God, having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of this state of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer."

According to this doctrine, it is certain that the elect will all be saved; not one of them can possibly be lost; but not an individual who was *not* thus elected will ever be saved; for the non-elect are destined, for a different purpose, to a different end; whose end will be wretched beyond all description—consigned over to irremediable woe and misery!

This is purely Calvinistic ground, which, to be sure, no one is to be impeached for taking, if he conscientiously believes it to be correct; yet, it is concluded, all will admit, that, to say the least of it, this ground is a *disputable* point; and therefore others may as conscientiously and sincerely take different ground. Here then the Calvinist and the Universalist are at issue; and it is hoped that by just argument, cool and dispassionate reasoning, assisted by the aid of divine testimony, the truth may be firmly established in the understanding.

It is too common for mankind to form and endeavor to establish themselves in a religious creed from the vain traditions of men, and then bring the scriptures of divine truth to bend to the dogmas of human authority. Thus when the doctrine of Calvinism has only gained an assendency over the understanding, it is then very easy to understand every text of scripture relative

to the redemption and salvation of man, (though more unlimited expressions could not have been used,) in a limited sense. And indeed there is some plausibility in the argument; for the meaning of all words must be governed, in a great measure, by the subject to which they are applied, and it cannot be rationally believed that the Holy Ghost would extend the idea of redemption, or salvation, whatever language may have been used, beyond the counsel and purpose of God.

Thus when we read of Christ's giving himself a ransom for *all*, that he is the propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*, that he tasted death for *every man*, to reconcile *all things* unto himself, that in Christ shall *all* be made alive &c. it is said by Calvinists that it only means all the *elect*; that is, *every man* of the *elect*; but they have no idea that any of these texts ought to be applied to the nonelect; for, say they, "The Epistles were all addressed particularly to believers, and when they speak of the purchased possession, have no reference to unbelievers, especially the nonelect!" Hence the danger of laying false premises; for however correct the reasoning may be, the data being groundless, the conclusion must be false. So long therefore as Calvinists are permitted to maintain this ground, it will be in vain to bring forward the most unequivocal and unlimited testimony in favor of Universal Salvation. Such testimony will never make any impression on the mind of a Calvinist, so long as he thinks his ground-work is tenable; for it is very easy to say that all such testimony applies only to present believers, or at farthest to *all the elect*! Whereas, only change the position, and consider all moral beings the objects of mercy, all equally the subjects of grace, and, as it respects the will and purpose of God, the heirs of salvation, and the same language will, at least, with as much, if not more, propriety, apply to all mankind indiscriminately. For as it is admitted that those equivocal terms ought not to be construed so as to embrace any thing more than is embraced in the purpose of God, to which they are applied, so, it is presumed that it will be admitted that they ought not to be construed so as to mean any thing less.

The counsel of God will undoubtedly stand, and truth will finally prevail. Hence let men profess, preach, or believe, what they will in time, it cannot alter the truth of eternity. A man's conduct, as well as his happiness, may depend much on his faith, as long as he remains in an imperfect and unfixed state, but no longer; and even in this state it is the truth only which can make him free. If the truth of God be in our favor, the sooner we know it the better; but if the truth of God be a-

gainst us, the longer we can be left to believe in that which is in our favor, the better ; happy indeed would it be for us if we could believe in it *eternally* ! For if the *truth* be against us, nothing but *falsehood* can be in our favor : but " If GOD be for us who can be against us ? " Therefore if the doctrine of endless misery be a truth, it is undoubtedly true upon Calvinistic ground ; for nothing can be more absurd than to say that God has undertaken to do that which will never be done ; or to say that he ever had any thoughts of mercy, and even sent his Son to redeem those, from whom mercy will be eventually withdrawn. If it be not the will of God to save all mankind, i. e. all moral nature indiscriminately, from sin and consequent misery, there is no power in the universe which can save them ; but if it be the will of God to save all men, as above stated, then, all the powers of earth and hell cannot prevail against it.

We will therefore take the liberty to inquire, seriously and candidly, What reason have we to believe, or what evidence have we that God has not equal thoughts of mercy towards all men ? It is often stated, from what authority it is difficult to determine, that, after man had sinned, God was under no obligation to exercise mercy towards him ! But was God *ever* under any obligation to man ? If so, that obligation must have originated in himself, from his own nature, and from the circumstance of his bringing man into existence, and not from any thing which man could have done. And if there were an obligation existing in God towards his creature man, while in a state of innocence, in consequence of his being his Creator and Father, which obligation existed entirely independent of, and anterior to, the actions of the creature (and there is a horrid cruelty in a contrary supposition) could that obligation be destroyed by the actions of his dependent offspring ? Certainly not ; however disobedient they might have been. For the disobedience of a child never can destroy an obligation on the part of the father, which obligation did not in the least degree depend on the *obedience* of the child for its existence. In order to discover more fully the impropriety of supposing that man could by wicked works totally destroy the love and mercy of God towards him (which love, by the way, will surely punish him for his iniquity) and also that we may see what dishonor it reflects on the character of Deity, to suppose that he could bring creatures into existence ; knowing at the same time that their existence would be a source of endless misery to them, let us carry the mind back, if possible, to the idea and time of creation. Nonentity, certainly, could not offend. Negative happiness, that is, a state of insensibility, is certainly

preferable to a state of positive misery. All the actions of moral nature must have been foreseen by him who is infinite in knowledge, even before moral and finite nature was endued with individual existence. Had not man been created, man certainly could not have been miserable. And the misery, as well as happiness, of finite beings, notwithstanding they may be consequences connected with, and in a great measure dependent on their own actions, in a subordinate sense, yet, they are also consequences connected with, and equally dependent on, the acts of God in *creation* and *providence*.

The above propositions need no proof ; first, because it is conceived that they are selfevident, and secondly, it is presumed they will be admitted.

How then is it possible to conceive that a BEING, infinitely good, infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, could bring into existence millions of human creatures, or even one man, who was to be the father of millions, knowing at the time, that the greater part, or even any part, would finally rue their existence, to the wasteless ages of eternity, without one glimpse of hope, in remediless wo and misery ! It makes no difference, in this argument as it respects the character of God, what makes the creature *endlessly* miserable ; for it must be evident to the smallest capacity that no *finite* act can produce an *infinite* consequence ; hence if endless misery *exists* it must be the effect of an infinite or eternal cause. Can it be any more derogatory to the character of God to say that he will make man endlessly miserable pursuant to an absolute, irrevokable, and eternal decree, then it is to say that he has made man, and endued him with powers and faculties, by which he will irrecoverably destroy himself ?

The proposition on which this argument rests, is, that no *being* human or divine, can do an act, knowing at the time all the consequences, without designing those consequences ; which proposition must be proved false before the force of the argument can be evaded. This argument will hold equally good when applied to man ; so far as the consequences of all our actions are foreseen, they are designed. It is true, there may be subordinate consequences which have but very little connexion with the ultimate end or design ; which consequences may be very opposite, in their nature, to the ultimate end. As for instance, a man may find it necessary to erect a new edifice on the site of an old building, which he finds it expedient to take down. His ultimate design is to build a *new house* ; but, in taking down the old one who is authorized to say that he does not equally design to make a *dust* !

But to return to our subject. If to create with a design to make happy, a design to bless, be an act of *love*, an act of *goodness*; to create with a design to make miserable, with a design to curse, must be considered an act of *hatred*, an act of *cruelty* ! What a character, then, does that *doctrine* give to Deity, which necessarily implies that God created man with both these designs; or with the knowledge of both as the final consequences, which, it is presumed, we have fully demonstrated, implies the same thing ?

To punish eternally, or to cease to be gracious (when it would have been as easy not to have brought into existence,) under the name of *justice*, is horrid beyond all description !

Such kind of justice would certainly degenerate into positive cruelty were it to be put in practice, as far as it might be, by man. What should we think of that parent who should leave his dependent offspring to perish in the open field, or to be a prey to ravenous beasts, without any other pretence, in point of justification, than the disobedience of the child ? Let conscience and the feelings of a good parent give the answer. And furthermore. Let us be exceedingly careful that we do not attribute any thing to the character of God which we might justly condemn in ourselves !

But it may be said, if God has sentenced man to eternal death, we are bound to believe it ; and no one has a right to call in question the character of the Almighty. It is granted. And when we are taught of God that the above proposition is true our mouths will be stopped ; but until more than human testimony can be produced in its favor we must withhold our belief.

The divine testimony reads thus ; " In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But it is no where said in the Bible that this death should be endless misery, or that man should be endlessly miserable in consequence of sin. The consequences of the first transgression, as described by God himself, fall infinitely short of endless misery. See Gen. iii. 16—19. Turn to the text and read it at large. Is here any evidence in favour of endless misery ? Not the least intimation of it. And surely we might reasonably expect to find it here if any where. And all the consequences here pointed out are earthly and temporal ; continuing, how long ? Till the creature returns to the dust from whence he was taken ! Here are the direful consequences of the first transgression, as pointed out by God himself ; bitter indeed, but falling infinitely short of endless misery. And if we consider those consequences as figurative of the more corroding sorrows of the mind, yet still they must be equally limited. " Till

thou return unto the ground"—till thou art brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus—"till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." See Matt. xxiii.

39. And if endless misery was not attached to the first transgression, as the consequence of sin, it will be difficult to prove that sin can ever produce such an effect; and, were it not for exceeding our present limits, it might be easily shown that all the evidence which is produced to prove endless sin and consequent misery, or an eternity of suffering in consequence of the sins committed in time, fall as infinitely short of proving this doctrine as the passage in Genesis, alluded to above.

We do not pretend that the idea, that the justice of God requires the eternal death of the sinner, is altogether peculiar to Calvinism, yet it is a distinguishing mark and fundamental principle of that doctrine. But Calvinism embraces another idea almost, if not quite, as derogatory to the character of God as the one we have considered; that is, the idea of particular election and predestination to eternal life, which, as generally taught and understood by Calvinists, necessary implies a reprobation to eternal death.

In order that we may have a just view of the Calvinistic idea of election and predestination, let us try, if possible, to get over the cruel idea of the creature's forfeiting all claim to the divine favor by one transgression, notwithstanding he was "*made subject to vanity*;" let us not stagger at the unnatural idea, 'That all relation between father and children was dissolved, in consequence of transgression on the part of the children; and let us admit, That the father was no longer under obligation to his offspring in consequence of his being the only means of bringing them into existence; I say, let us for the moment, admit all these absurdities for the sake of viewing the second fundamental error of Calvinism in its true color. These things being admitted, what follows. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression." Hence all stood in equal need of mercy, and all equally dependent on their Creator. And if all claim was lost,* all right and title to eternal life forfeited, then certainly no *one* individual, or any *set* of individuals had any claim, right,

* We are willing to admit that the creature had no claim by his own merits; if he had any claim, that claim existed in the goodness of the Creator, and not in the merit of the creature.

or title, *above*, or in *preference* to the *rest* ! And no one will dare to presume, or say, that it was not in the *power* of God, had it been consistent with his character, to have had mercy on the *whole*, as well as on *part* ! Mercy surely is not a hard task for *him* who has the goodness to forgive ! And furthermore. If it be consistent with the character of God to reconcile all things unto himself, it is presumed, all will acknowledge that his power is sufficient to accomplish such a design. No just reason therefore can be offered why God will not have mercy upon all, and reconcile all things unto himself, in the most unlimited and universal sense, except it be, that it is inconsistent with his *character* ! Here we are brought up ! What an insurmountable difficulty ! Be astonished, O ye heavens ! Let the earth be clothed in sackcloth ! While it is recorded, That, (notwithstanding all mankind were in one predicament, all laying at the mercy of God, and altogether dependent on him who was the author of their existence, then, or what is still worse, even previous to transgression, that is to say,) “ GOD FROM ALL ETERNITY ELECTED SOME UNTO EVERLASTING LIFE ! ! ” And all this “ *without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creature,* ” but “ OUT OF HIS MERE GOOD PLEASURE ! ! ! ” If man could have performed any thing like this—forgive us, fellow mortals, if we say it would have been in character, though we now hope better things even of finite nature—But to say that God—! What shall we name it ? God forbid that we should say that he has added *insult* to *injury* ! *Injury*, in giving existence to beings, and placing them under such circumstances, and that well known to the *Author* of their existence, as would not render their existence a blessing to them, but an eternal curse ! *Insult*, by delivering a *part* out of these circumstances, not for any peculiar merit in those thus delivered, but out of *mere good pleasure*, thereby giving full proof to those who are not delivered that there is no lack of *power*, nor were their circumstances irreparable, if God had seen fit !

The wisdom from above is “ WITHOUT PARTIALITY.” But if the doctrine we are examining does not attach *partiality* to the Supreme Jehovah, we know of no sentiment that could.

To say that God chose the elect because he knew they would repent and believe in Christ, as some have said, is no more than saying that he chose them because he chose to chuse them ; for if he knew that they would repent, he knew what would lead them to repentance ; to wit, the operation of his Spirit, or the manifestation of his goodness ; and if he knew that they would

believe in Christ, he also knew that the truth originated in himself which they would have to believe, and in order for them to believe it, it would be necessary for *him* to bring them to the knowledge of it, through the medium of proper evidence, which truth would make them free ; and he must also know that (on the ground of Calvinism) no such truth existed in favour of the non-elect ! Hence there would be as much propriety in saying that God now converts souls unto Christ because he knows they are elected, as to say that he elected them because he knew they would be converted !

We have now brought the doctrine, or ourselves, into a sad dilemma. Will our Calvinistic brethren be so kind as to help their doctrine, or us, out of this inexplicable labyrinth ?

The doctrine of *election* is undoubtedly a scriptural doctrine. But the *elect*, whoever they are, are elected for the benefit of the *non-elect* ; and however honorable it may be to them, yet it is not an exclusive favor. See an illustration of this doctrine in No. 3. page 169. Having this view of the scriptural doctrine of election, there is no difficulty in reconciling it with universal redemption and reconciliation, or the restitution of all things to holiness and consequent happiness.

The doctrine of Calvinism is not only derogatory to the character of God and destructive to the happiness of man, but it is inconsistent with itself. For notwithstanding it acknowledges that, "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power holiness, justice, goodness, and truth," and that the works of his providence are "his most holy, wise and powerful, preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions," yet it denies that *all things* are governed for good ; i. e. for the good of *all the creatures* thus governed !

Were not Adam and Eve the creatures of God ? Are not all their posterity the creatures of God ? And does he most holy, wise and powerfully *preserve them all* ? Yes, (according to Calvinism) he preserves the greater part of them in sin and misery, and will to all eternity ! How does this agree with his *unchangeable goodness* ? If God most holy, wise and powerfully govern *all his creatures* and *all their actions*, who is authorized to say that he will not govern them all for good, as he did the actions of Joseph's brethren, who, themselves, shared in the good which God designed, although they meant it unto evil ?

When it can be proved, *first*, That "all mankind by the fall lost communion with God, and are under his *wrath* and *curse*, and so made liable—to the pains of hell forever ; and *secondly*, "That

God out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity *elects some* to everlasting life," to the *exclusion of others*, and those thus excluded will suffer the wrath and curse of God in hell, i. e. in a place of never ceasing torment, then, and not till then, the doctrine of endless misery will be proved.

It is really curious to see, in the Evangelical Primer, Gen. iii. 8, quoted, to prove that "all mankind by the fall lost *communion* with God;" when directly after, verse 9—15, we have an account of a conference which took place between God and man, in which conference, God declared that the SEED of the woman should bruise the serpents head. Also to see Eph. ii. 3, quoted to prove that all are under the wrath of God, which text, in connexion with the context, clearly proves that this wrath was no barrier against their being quickened together with Christ. See the text in its connexion. Also Gal. iii. 10, to prove that all men are under the curse of the law, which curse will apply to the elect as well as the non-elect; and to shew that this curse is not an absolute barrier against salvation, it is said, verse 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." If Mr. E. could have found any texts in the Bible more to his point, he undoubtedly would have quoted them, in the room of those he has inserted at large.

As to mankind's being liable to the pains of hell forever, we do not object to the words, if we may be allowed to apply a passage from the prophecy of Jonah, by way of explanation. "And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights—the earth with her bars was about me *for ever*—yet I will look again toward thy holy temple—out of the belly of *hell* cried I, and thou heardst my voice!" Jonah i. 17. ii. 2, 4, 6.

MORAL REFLECTIONS.

Man, with all other animals is amenable to the laws of nature. He must *suffer* in common with the brutal creation, the *inconveniences*, as well as *enjoy* the *blessings of life*: and in this respect, man has no preeminence above a beast. (Eccl. iii. 19.)—But how long shall man be a slave to *fanaticism*? How long shall he fancy himself exposed to, and that millions of his fellow-nature must inevitably suffer, *infinite evils*, from which the brutal creation are entirely exempt? How long shall the most noble creature of this lower world be degraded below the reptiles of the dust? Is there no *antidote* to this deadly *poison of fanaticism*? "Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there?" Or

have the physicians all become "physicians of no value;" like the shepherds of Israel, which "caused" the sheep to "go astray?" Who can wonder at the morbid apathy of human nature, when they have been taught from their cradles, yea, have drank in the idea, as it were, with their mother's milk, that all, even the best of them, are by nature *totally depraved*! and that millions, and perhaps *they* among the number, were destined to *endless misery* even before they were born! How long shall children be taught the dreadful idea that God is their enemy! and that man, in a state of nature, (which, to say the least, is the state of all children) is obnoxious to Deity! And of course, liable to be sunk, at any moment, beyond the reach of mercy! Who made the wonderful discovery that a state of *grace* is something distinct from a state of *nature*? Is *grace* any thing less or more than mere *favor*? And does not man, even in a state of *nature*, enjoy the *favor* of God? To what source, except it be to the heated imagination and blind zeal of infuriated bigots, may be traced the origin of ideas so derogatory to the character of God, and hostile to the happiness of man? Have not fanatics, instead of remembering that "GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE," created *gods in their own image*, and thereby "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man—and served the *creature* more than the CREATOR, who is blessed forever more?" Return, O, child of humanity! to the contemplation of *nature*—take for thine assistant the pure light of *divine revelation*—lay out of the scale the dogmas of human authority—behold things as they *are*, and not as they appear to be through the medium of a *false glass*—and remember that all facts that cannot be supported with such evidence as would support any other fact in a similar case, are not worth contending for. There are many sources of evidence that are permanent and may be relied on.—The same sun, from time immemorial, has given us light and warmth. The revolving seasons continue in the same order and succession. The fruitified earth continues to reward the labors of the husbandman. And nature herself is unbosoming her treasures on every side to render us happy. How then shall we say that God is inimical to man? And how shall we say that he is *not* so, if millions were destined to *endless misery*, even before they were endued with a *conscious existence*! When human nature shall have learned *that all-important lesson, necessary for every one to know*, that in very deed all mankind are "born free and equal;" that no beings in this lower creation can claim exclusive privileges; neither by birth, foreordination, or predestination; that all re-

igion consists in *doing good* ; that the happiness of all moral nature is made up of the happiness of all the individuals that compose it ; that the more any one can contribute to the general welfare, the more he will increase his individual happiness ; that every idea of distinction amongst men, excepting that which proceeds from real merit, is destructive to *genius*, and inimical to virtue ; and that every idea of merit, excepting that which is derived from actual *deeds* of justice and benevolence, and not from any outward *profession*, or degrees of *honor* conferred by a privileged *order*, is *anti-christian*, and destructive to improvement—then—and not till then—shall we see the fulfilment of those scripture prophecies which speak of **UNIVERSAL PEACE** ! Then “ the lion and the lamb, (the strong and the weak) will lay down together,” and mankind will make one grand advance towards human perfection.

A radical change in the mode of thinking must be produced before man will learn his true interest. To produce which event, we must begin with *children* ; for it cannot be expected that those who have already grown old in *error*, will be very easily turned from their vain notions and superstitious ideas.

I say we must begin with the *rising generation* ; for so long as children are early impregnated with the idea that thousands and millions are born into the world under such circumstances that they must be inevitably miserable as long as God exists, (or that such an event is *possible*,) they will grow up in a state of *slavish fear*, with about as much liberty to *think*, as a man “ bound hand and foot,” would have to *walk* ; not daring to exercise that noble faculty which alone distinguishes man from the brutal creation.

The first impressions which children receive, are very lasting ; they continue to influence their conduct, in a great degree, thro’ life ; and though they should afterwards be rationally convinced that many of them were false, yet they continue more or less to feel their baneful effects. It is therefore a matter of the greatest importance that children should be early taught to have some just views of the character of God, as the creator of the universe ; the reverential homage due to that character, as the **FATHER** of the spirits of all flesh ; their continual dependence on him, as children of the most high God ; the relation which exists between God and all moral nature, by creation and providence ; and the moral obligations they are continually under, to God, and to one another, in consequence of those manifold blessings which they mutually receive, and reciprocally enjoy, under the auspices of divine **LOVE**. To produce such an effect, the “ Child’s Scriptural Catechism” is earnestly recommended as a suitable book to be taught to children.

POETIC DEPARTMENT.

ODE ON TIME.

Ere time—O who can stretch a thought
To unborn date, when time was not,
Or light from total darkness brought,
Or order in the system known ?
When atoms, particles refin'd,
Chaos of nature, uncombin'd,
Was all, except th' Eternal Mind,
Whose wisdom fills the radiant throne !

Unbounded love, th' Eternal Cause,
Or He who gave to nature laws,
Eternally without a pause,
Self-mov'd, omnipotent divine ;
Whose presence fills the vast expanse,
Did his own gracious will advance,
Celestial glories to enhance—
Eternity gave birth to time.

The system moves, the orbits form,
The sparkling gems the skies adorn,
And light proclaims th' effulgent morn,
Which shone to Deity alone ;
Revolving wheels in motion turn,
Their days and nights, and seasons learn,
All big with life, with ardor burn,
Kind providence with joy to own.

Th' eternal principle of life,
In nature's law is brought to birth,
Millions come forth, with joy and mirth ,
The work of an Almighty arm ;
Whose hand supports, whose hand defends,
Whose goodness every blessing sends,
Whose mercy unto all extends——
He will deliver us from harm.

No. 1. *Page 16, line 7, for breast, read beast—p. 29, l. 22, f. least, r. lest.*

No. 2. *p. 71, l. 22, f. more, r. no more.*

No. 3. *p. 137, bottom line, after the word gone, r. before me—p. 138, l. 5, from bottom, f. of some, r. in some—p. 139, l. 1, delete is—p. 140, l. 20, f. notions, r. motions—ibid., l. 2 & 25, after the word extrinsic, r. or intrinsic—p. 146. last period, r. But brotherly love is a safe barrier against a persecuting spirit; it is a devouring fire to all the machinations of the enemy of righteousness, and to all the hay, wood and stubble, &c.—p. 147, l. 18, f. , r. and—p. 161, l. 1, f. hence, r. here—p. 184, at the bottom, the whole of the following, after the word crystal, was left out through mistake. “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river was the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”*

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which grew also in the midst of the garden, was then, no doubt, what it is now, which we may understand by the following scriptures. Rom. viii. 20, “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.” vii. 23, “But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” In this place perhaps it will be well to notice the two trees as represented by St. Paul in this 7th Chapter to the Romans, by two laws. In the 12th verse he says, “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good.” Verse 14, “For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.” Verse 16, “If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.” Verse 21, “I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.” This law has been noticed from the 23d verse. In chap. 8th. 2, These laws are noticed in such a way as to give a clear idea of their powers and nature. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

P. 186, l. 20, f. when r. where—p. 187, l. 6, f. least, r. lest.

pk





















